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A Mixed Methods Study of High School Teachers' and Administrators' Perceptions of School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

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A MIXED METHODS STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS' AND ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

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BY

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By

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DEDICATION

To my wife Sara, and my three amazing children Anna, Allie, and Carson.

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First, I'd like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I owe all I have ever accomplished to him.

I'd also like to thank my family. Without their love and support, none of this would have been possible. My wife, Sara, has been my rock throughout this journey. You were always there to listen to my ideas and give me feedback. You shouldered a lot of extra responsibilities to make sure I had time to work and believed in me when I did not believe in myself. To my children, Anna, Allie, and Carson, thank you for being patient and understanding the times I had to do school work. One of the greatest joys in my life is getting to be your dad. I love all three of you, and I am looking forward to watching you all grow up. Thank you to my parents, Oscar and Debbie Dean, who instilled in me both worth ethic and a drive to succeed, and taught me the value of education. To my father in-law and mother-in law, Terry and Cathy Sellers, thank you for supporting me and my family through this process.

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- Taught Freshmen College Prep English
- Assistant Football Coach
- Assistant Wrestling Coach

Houston County High School — 2004-2010
Warner Robins, GA
English Teacher

- Taught Freshmen College Prep, Career Tech, and Remedial English
- Served on School Council (2007-2008)
- Head Varsity Basketball Coach (2007-2010)
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ABSTRACT

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a framework used by educators to improve school climates by developing student academic and social skills through the alignment of behavioral expectations, positive acknowledgement for appropriate behaviors, the encouragement of positive staff and student relationships, and data-based decision making. Even though PBIS is comprised of three tiers of increased support, the majority of schools in the United States have only implemented the first tier, or School-Wide PBIS. Furthermore, due to barriers that are unique to high school settings, most of the schools that have implemented SWPBIS have been elementary and middle schools. The purpose of this explanatory, sequential mixed methods study was to examine teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia high school. The study school was in the first year of SWPBIS implementation and was only partially implementing their framework at the time of the study. Twenty-seven teachers and three administrators at the study school completed the PBIS Perception Survey, and the results were averaged to establish a baseline for the qualitative portion of the study. Additionally, eight teachers and two administrators participated in semi-structured interviews for the qualitative segment of the study. This study was developed around one overarching research question: What are high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Additionally, three subquestions directed the research. 1) What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS? 2) What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? 3) To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Through qualitative data analysis, four themes emerged which included teacher and administrator

understanding of SWPBIS, potential benefits, implementation barriers, and factors positively affecting implementation. Data results from the study indicated administrators had a more comprehensive understanding of SWPBIS even though both groups revealed the utilization of SWPBIS could provide potential benefits to the overall success of the school especially in regards to the climate. However, the teachers signified several school level factors needed to change in order for SWPBIS to completely impact the climate. Ultimately, a lack of teacher buy-in for the system existed because all areas of change were not addressed prior to the beginning of implementation. Even so, some positive effects on school climate were realized despite full implementation and a lack of teacher buy-in.

INDEX WORDS: PBIS, SWPBIS, High School, Change

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Student discipline was an important responsibility for public school officials in the United States because effective discipline practices were essential in ensuring well-managed classrooms, supporting student learning, and maintaining the physical safety of staff and students (Eckes & Russo, 2012; Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002). However, beginning in the 1930s and progressing into the 2000s, student behaviors school officials had to address became more severe (Eckes & Russo, 2012; Schiro, 1985; Stouffer, 1952; Toby, 1998). As a result, the consequential methods schools officials used became more severe as well (Casella, 2001; Eckes & Russo, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Even though schools were intended to be safe havens from disruptive behavior, schools in the United States were often assemblages of troublesome behaviors (O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). Both students and educators experienced the negative effects of adverse student behavior (Arum & Velez, 2013; Owens, 2015). However, many educators did not fully understand the concept of behavior management (Maag, 2016).

Student behavior management could not be fully addressed without an understanding of human behavior. Behaviorism, first developed by John B. Watson (1913), suggested that behavior was the focus of psychology (Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1938). In the 1930s, B. F. Skinner developed radical behaviorism in which he suggested that learning was contingent upon stimuli, responses, and reinforcements (Maag, 2016; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Skinner, 1938). Skinner's work was the

foundation for applied behavior analysis, which consisted of both respondent and operant conditioning (Maag, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Skinner, 1953).

Respondent conditioning occurred when a neutral stimulus associated with an unconditioned stimulus led to future automatic responses (Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1953). Conversely, operant conditioning, which was based on the contingencies of reinforcement, transpired when environmental stimuli produce consequences (Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Lattal & Perone, 1998; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). The contingencies of reinforcement were based on the association among antecedents, behavior, and consequences and included positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, positive punishment, and negative punishment (Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Loovis, 2017; Pierce & Cheney, 2013, Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Skinner, 1953).

The use of rewards and reinforcement had a long history in education (Kaestle, 1973; Kazdin, 2012; Lancaster, 1803). However, incentive-based behavior systems based on operant conditioning, referred to as token economies, were not used until the 1960s, initially for patients in psychological institutions (Boerke & Reitman, 2011; Kazdin, 1982; Zlomke & Zlomke, 2003). The first uses of token economies in educational settings occurred in the 1970s and 1980s (Boegli & Wasik, 1978; Kazdin, 1982).

Regardless of the importance of effective discipline practices, not all educators agreed on which methods were most appropriate (Casella, 2006; Schiro, 1985; Stouffer, 1952; Toby, 1998). School officials traditionally used punitive consequences such as detention, Saturday school, in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), and expulsion to punish or exclude students who exhibited inappropriate behaviors

(Allman & Slate, 2011; Eckes & Russo, 2012; Flannery, Frank, & Kato, 2012; Skiba, Arredondo, & Rausch, 2014). However, exclusionary discipline practices such as OSS and expulsion were found to be more harmful to students than helpful (Fabelo et al., 2011; Simson, 2014; Skiba et al., 2014). Furthermore, most school discipline policies did not address the teaching of appropriate behaviors (Fenning et al., 2012).

Exclusionary discipline practices led to increased absences. In order to obtain the full benefits of an education, students needed to attend school regularly; however, many school-aged children in the United States failed to attend school consistently (London, Sanchez, & Castrechini, 2016; Tanner-Smith & Wilson, 2013). As a result, chronic absenteeism became a major focus point for school officials because of the augmentation of academic difficulties and achievement gaps associated with habitual absenteeism (Tanner-Smith & Wilson, 2013). The definitive consequence of high absenteeism was an increased risk of students dropping out of school (London et al., 2016; Rumberger, 2011).

Another system that incorporated token economies as well as other principles of applied behavior analysis was positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS; Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2006). PBIS was developed by researchers in the 1980s at the University of Oregon as a process for managing, without the use of punitive consequences, the behaviors of students with emotional and behavior disorders (Kincaid et al., 2015; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). In school settings, PBIS was used as a framework for the implementation of practices that contributed to the academic and behavioral achievement of all students (Flannery, Frank, Kato, Doren & Fenning, 2013; Horner, 2013). PBIS was added to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the

1997 reauthorization and was again included in the 2004 reauthorization as an appropriate means of addressing student behavior (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

The implementation framework of PBIS was designed to enhance students' academic and social skills through the utilization of behavioral interventions supported by data collection and monitoring (Carroll, Lawlor, & Phee, 2012; Coffey & Horner, 2012; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). The basis of PBIS was the alignment of clear behavioral expectations, incentives for students who exhibited appropriate behaviors, the promotion of positive student and staff relations, and data-based decision-making (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Overall, the use of the PBIS framework was meant to create positive school climates and proactive systems of providing and monitoring early interventions for students in need of behavioral assistance (Coffey & Horner, 2012).

The PBIS framework was comprised of three tiers that encompassed interventions for whole schools, individual classrooms, and specific students, as deemed necessary (Kincaid et al., 2015; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). These tiers were classified as Tier 1, primary or universal; Tier 2, secondary or targeted; and Tier 3, tertiary or intensive (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm, McIntosh, & Cooley, 2014; Nocera, Whitbread, & Nocera, 2014). The PBIS model was similar to the response to intervention method as both were designed to increase student interventions for learning as needed through tiered support (Nocera et al., 2014).

Even though more than 22,000 schools implemented PBIS, the majority only utilized the primary tier elements because of the additional resources required for the secondary and tertiary tiers (Bradshaw, Pas, Debnam, & Johnson, 2015; Horner & Sugai, 2015). The primary tier, also referred to as school-wide positive behavior interventions

and supports (SWPBIS), was used as a deterrence of problem behaviors through proactive measures (Horner & Sugai, 2015; Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2006). SWPBIS included all school-related settings and incorporated not only students, but also staff members and families (Sugai & Horner, 2006). In addition, SWPBIS included the establishment and instruction of three to five behavioral expectations, a system for recognizing appropriate behaviors, and the formation of a PBIS team with the responsibility of oversight and management of all SWPBIS processes (Flannery et al., 2013; Horner & Sugai, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014).

The secondary and tertiary tiers were designed for the provision of more intensive interventions for students who repeatedly demonstrated inappropriate behaviors (Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014). Secondary tiered interventions were delivered though small-group formats, whereas students in the tertiary tier received individualized interventions (Flannery et al., 2013; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015). Typically, 10–15% of students required secondary supports, and 1–5% require tertiary supports (Horner & Sugai, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014).

Ensuring SWPBIS fidelity was necessary to achieve successful outcomes (Bohanon et al., 2012; Coffey & Horner, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2006). As a result, SWPBIS fidelity assessment was vital because school officials used assessments to create implementation plans as well as measure student outcomes and human resources (Bruhn, Lane, & Hirsch, 2013). Extensively used SWPBIS assessment instruments found to be effective (Fallon, McCarthy, Hagermoster-Sanetti, 2014; George & Childs, 2012; Kelm et al., 2014) were the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET), Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ), and office discipline referrals (ODRs).

Most of the SWPBIS research was conducted in elementary and middle schools (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2015; Guillory, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014). Behaviorally, the results of these studies included reductions in ODRs, ISS, and OSS (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al., 2015; Guillory, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014). However, researchers also found SWPBIS correlated with academic gains (Guillory, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014).

Only a small percentage of schools that implemented SWPBIS were high schools (Horner, 2013). Generally, the implementation of SWPBIS in high school settings was more difficult than in elementary and middle schools (Flannery et al., 2013). Notwithstanding, researchers discovered that SWPBIS systems correlated with reductions in ODRs, bullying and peer victimization, and tardies (Bohanon & Wu, 2014; Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al., 2015; Tyre, Feuerborn, & Pierce, 2011). Furthermore, despite the lack of available research on correlations between SWPBIS and academic success, researchers in two studies indicated positive relationships between SWPBIS and academic variables (Freeman et al., 2015; Gietz & McIntosh, 2014).

Even though the use of SWPBIS correlated with positive results, school staff at all levels were affected by barriers to the implementation process (Bohanon & Wu, 2014; Coffey & Horner, 2012; Lohrmann, Martin, & Patil, 2013; Swain-Bradway, Pinkney, & Flannery, 2015). Additionally, high school personnel were confronted with additional barriers, including structural barriers, student age and maturity levels, staff acceptance and commitment to SWPBIS processes, and the reformation of staff members' preconceived notions about responsibility (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Flannery et al.,

2013). Generally, high school SWPBIS implementation was a longer process than at elementary and middle schools (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015).

As discipline problems in schools continued to grow, teachers and administrators sought more proactive means of addressing these behaviors. Research studies indicated SWPBIS is an effective method for decreasing discipline infractions; however, few studies assessed SWPBIS in high school settings. Furthermore, teacher buy-in was found to be a critical aspect of SWPBIS effectiveness in elementary and middle schools, but little research was available on the importance of teacher buy-in of SWPBIS in high school settings. Thus, the researcher examined the effects of SWPBIS implementation in a high school setting by determining teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS practices.

Despite the positive outcomes discovered by SWPBIS researchers, some parents and educators objected to the use of SWPBIS in schools because of concerns that the practices were demeaning to some students and produced negative school climates (Pierce & Cheney, 2013). Furthermore, some researchers found adverse effects related to the distribution of tangible items to students who displayed appropriate behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). As a result, the debate remains on whether or not SWPBIS is an effective behavior management system for educational settings.

Statement of the Problem

Student discipline problems are a consistent hindrance to effective learning environments in American schools. The results of research studies conducted on the effectiveness of SWPBIS indicated that, when implemented with fidelity, the use of SWPBIS processes aided in the reduction of ODRs. However, due to a small percentage

of high schools among schools that have implemented SWPBIS, a limited number of studies have been conducted on SWPBIS in high school settings. Furthermore, in the few published studies, the researchers chose U.S. student populations concentrated in the Pacific Northwest and Midwest. Additionally, many of the researchers only utilized quantitative data and did not examine qualitative data. Therefore, gaps remain in the published research.

Purpose of the Study

In this explanatory, sequential, mixed methods study the researcher proposed to examine teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia high school. First, in the quantitative phase of the study, teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS were analyzed through the obtainment of statistical, quantitative survey results. After the obtainment of the quantitative data, a purposefully selected group of teachers and administrators from the study school participated in one-on-one interviews to discuss their perceptions of SWPBIS. A total of seven teachers and three administrators participated in one-on-one interviews.

The qualitative segment of the study was based on social constructivism. Social constructivists believe people seek understanding of both their work and home environments (Creswell, 2014). The researcher's philosophy aligns with social constructivism because of the researcher's belief that there is not a single, observable reality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Instead, there are numerous interpretations of single events (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, the goal of this research study was to rely on the views of the participants who had experiences with SWPBIS (Creswell, 2014).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was based on the goal of gaining an understanding of how both high school teachers and administrators perceived SWPBIS and the differences in the perceptions of the two roles (see Figure 1). The researcher theorized that even though individuals in each position had different responsibilities, their perceptions would be similar because of the shared experiences of working in the same school. It was critical to examine both teacher and administrator perspectives to gain a complete understanding of both the positive and negative views of SWPBIS in a high school setting.

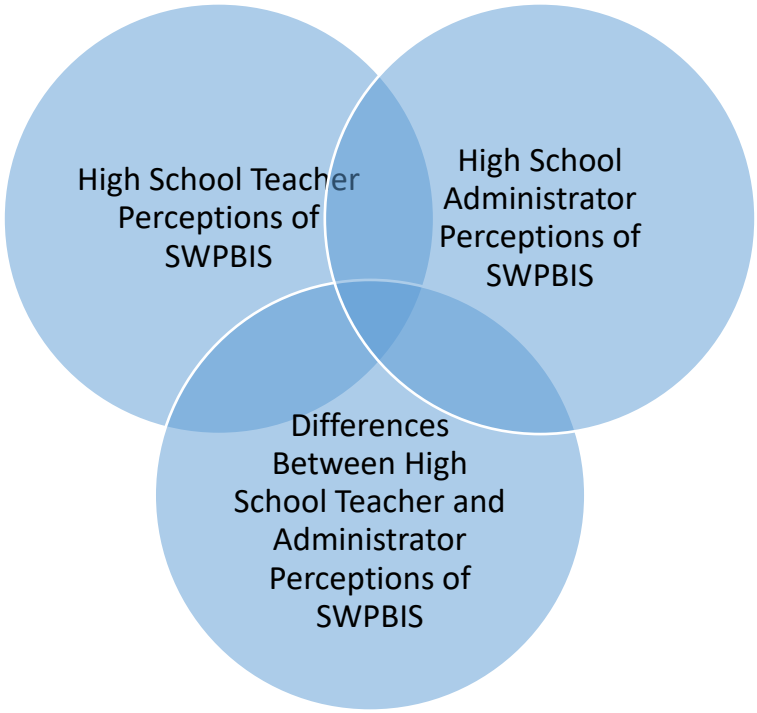

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study of perceptions of school-based positive behavior interventions and supports (SWPBIS).

Significance of the Study

The results of this study may benefit educational leaders who are seeking to improve student behavior school wide, especially in high school settings, by adding to the

literature on SWPBIS. Additionally, as staff buy-in was indicated to be a facilitator of sustained SWPBIS implementation (Bohanon & Wu, 2014), the results of this study may assist school leaders in employing the best strategies for acquiring staff buy-in. Furthermore, high school personnel were found to discount research conducted on interventions if the research did not take place in high schools or the high schools were dissimilar to their own (Bohanon et al., 2012; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Therefore, the results of this study may add to the research base on high school SWPBIS.

Research Questions

Through the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher answered the following questions. The overarching research question was the following: What are high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Three subquestions guided the research.

1. What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS?
2. What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?
3. To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?

Limitations

One limitation of the study was that the researcher served in the capacity of PBIS coordinator for the school district where the study took place. Due to the researcher's position, the teacher responses on both the survey and in the interviews might have been affected. The researcher attempted to limit this effect by ensuring anonymity of the study's participants and using other interviewers not employed at the school.

The researcher assumed that as the principal in the study school volunteered the school to participate in the Georgia Department of Education version of SWPBIS, both the principal and school staff were willing to adapt their approaches to school-wide discipline to meet the criteria set forth by the Georgia Department of Education PBIS team. The researcher also assumed the school's principal was willing to participate in this study. Finally, in regards to the study's participants, the researcher assumed all responses were accurate and truthful.

Delimitations

One reason the researcher chose to study SWPBIS in a high school setting was the researcher's background as a high school teacher and school-level administrator. The Georgia Department of Education PBIS team limited the number of schools that can begin SWPBIS implementation to 10 per year per school district. As this was Year 1 of SWPBIS implementation for the school district in which this study took place, the number of potential high schools that could participate in the study was limited to two.

Definitions of Terms

Explanatory, sequential, mixed methods design: This type of research design first involves the collection and examination of quantitative data followed by the collection and examination of qualitative data in the next phase (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2007).

Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS): This framework is comprised of three tiers that encompass interventions for the whole school, individual classrooms or groups, and specific students as deemed necessary (Kelm et al., 2014).

Rather than punitive responses to student inappropriate behavior, PBIS emphasizes a proactive, positive approach.

School-wide positive behavior interventions and supports (SWPBIS): The primary tier of the PBIS framework is SWPBIS, which is used as a deterrence of problem behaviors through proactive measures in all school-related settings. SWPBIS includes the establishment and instruction of three to five behavioral expectations, a system for recognizing appropriate behaviors, and the formation of a PBIS team with the responsibility of oversight and management of all SWPBIS processes (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012).

Summary

Throughout the history of the United States, school officials traditionally used the most severe punitive consequences to address the most extreme student behaviors. However, the use of exclusionary discipline measures has been found to be more detrimental to student success than beneficial. Understanding the need for an alternate means of addressing inappropriate student behavior, researchers at the University of Oregon developed PBIS as a method for managing, without punitive consequences, the aggressive behaviors of students with emotional and behavior disorders. Based on tenets of applied behavior analysis, PBIS is a three-tiered intervention framework that is used school wide, in classrooms or groups, and with individual students as a method of positively affecting the behavioral and academic success of all students. Tier 1, which is also known as SWPBIS, has been successfully utilized by over 22,000 schools, most of which are elementary and middle schools. Even though SWPBIS has been employed much less extensively in high schools, researchers who conducted SWPBIS studies in

high schools in the Pacific Northwest and Midwest found correlations between SWPBIS and behavioral and academic outcomes.

Through a sequential, explanatory, mixed methods study, the researcher examined high school teacher and administrator perspectives of SWPBIS in one Middle Georgia high school. In the quantitative portion of the study, the researcher analyzed teacher and administrator statistical survey results about the perception of SWPBIS. Alternately, the qualitative phase was comprised of one-one-one teacher and administrator interviews about the perspectives of SWPBIS. The data collected during the interviews were used to expand on the quantitative results.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study examined SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia high school based on teacher and administrator perceptions regarding the effectiveness of SWPBIS and school-wide discipline practices. The conceptual framework for this study was guided by the conception that implementation of SWPBIS in schools establishes environments that decrease ODRs and enhance the effectiveness of discipline systems in schools. Therefore, it was appropriate to review the research and literature in the domains of human behavior and student behavior management. Several areas were investigated within the human behavior domain: behaviorism, applied behavior analysis, respondent conditioning, operant conditioning, the four contingencies, and token economies. Two subjects were examined within the student behavior-management domain: exclusionary discipline and PBIS. The domain of SWPBIS was reviewed more thoroughly, including description of tiers of support, fidelity of implementation, SWPBIS in different school levels, barriers to high school SWPBIS implementation, opposition to SWPBIS, and negative results of SWPBIS. These domains provided a framework for the study of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia high school.

Discipline is an important aspect of public schools, and efficacious practices were essential in the maintenance of classroom management, the promotion of student learning, and the insurance of overall school safety (Eckes & Russo, 2012; Freeman, Simonsen, Briere, & MacSuga-Gage, 2014; Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014; Mowen, 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002). However, what school personnel and the general public viewed as the most critical school discipline issues changed over time (Casella, 2006; Crews &

Montgomery, 2001; Gilbert, 1986; Goldstein, Apter, & Harootunian, 1984; Mowen, 2014; Phaneuf, 2009; Schiro, 1985; Skiba & Losen, 2015; Stouffer, 1952; Toby, 1998). During the 1930s and 1940s, most Americans believed that student gum chewing, too much talking, and dress code violations were the most important discipline issues faced by school personnel (Goldstein et al., 1984; Schiro, 1985). In the early 1950s, disrespect to school personnel, theft, and vandalism were added as growing discipline concerns (Gilbert, 1986; Schiro, 1985; Stouffer, 1952).

As the United States moved into the Vietnam War era and the Civil Rights Movement of the late 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the most significant school discipline problems took a more violent shift, and Americans grew more concerned about increased violence and disrespect towards school officials (Blythe, 1980; Friere, 1992; Phaneuf, 2009; Stinchcombe, 1964; Toby, 1998). As a result of increased media coverage of school violence, the U.S. Congress passed the Safe Schools Act in 1974 that mandated a study be conducted to determine the seriousness of school violence (Schiro, 1985; Toby, 1998). The study, titled *Violent Schools–Safe Schools*, was published in 1977, and the researchers concluded that school violence was higher than in previous years but was not as dire as perceived (Schiro, 1985; Toby, 1998). In the 1980s, school discipline concerns moved to drugs and gang violence as the war on drugs escalated (Crews & Montgomery, 2001; Skiba & Losen, 2015). Finally, as a result of increased national concerns as well as highly publicized school shootings like the one that occurred in Columbine, Colorado, school officials began implementing security measures such as security cameras, metal detectors, school resource officers, and zero-tolerance policies in the 1990s and 2000s

(Casella, 2001, 2006; Eckes & Russo, 2012; Kupchick & Monahan, 2006; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Human Behavior

Human behavior was a main topic in the arts, humanities, and science since the Renaissance (Lattal & Perone, 1998). The effects of behavior were most noticeable in U.S. schools even though they were intended to be places of safety (O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). Researchers from the National Center for Education Statistics (Robers, Kemp, Truman, & Snyder, 2013) indicated that up to 50% of schools reported problems with disruptive classroom behavior, physical assaults, gang activity, and bullying. Furthermore, student behavior in schools greatly influenced the ability of students to learn and teachers to teach (Arum & Velez, 2013). For example, Casillas et al. (2012) found that adverse student behavior contributed to poor academic performance. Additionally, a study conducted by Owens (2015) for the Georgia Professional Standards Commission revealed that 44% percent of Georgia teachers were leaving the profession within the first 5 years of teaching. Further examination of this crisis revealed that 97% of teachers leaving the profession cited reasons as a result of student discipline and classroom-management issues (Owens, 2015). Consequently, most educators understood the importance of behavior management despite the reality that behavior management was a greatly misunderstood concept that most educators harbored strong, yet often inaccurate ideas and feelings towards (Maag, 2016).

Psychological Elements of Behavior

Behavior denoted what individuals did, exhibited overtly and covertly, and executed as a means of interacting with the environment (Kearney, 2015; Lattal &

Perone, 1998; Maag, 2016; O'Reilly, Gevarter, Falcomata, Sigafoos, & Lancioni, 2014; Skinner, 1938). Throughout history, the causes of human behavior were attributed to a multitude of sources including internal entities such as the soul and external bases like the moon, astrological alignment, and the gods; however, these explanations were not scientific (Pierce & Cheney, 2013). Conversely, behavior theory was the premise that all behavior was the result of intricate contact between inherent influence and environmental involvement (O'Reilly et al., 2014; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1938; Zilio, 2016). This school of thought, known as behaviorism, began in the early 20th century with the work of Watson (1913), who redefined psychology as a branch of experimental science and suggested the prediction and control of behavior as the focus (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007; Dixon, Vogel, & Tarbox, 2012; Malone & Garcia-Penagos, 2014; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Staddon, 2014; Watrin & Darwich, 2012).

In the 1930s, B. F. Skinner emerged as a leading behaviorist (Cooper et al., 2007; Lattal & Perone, 1998; Schneider & Morris, 1987; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Staddon, 2014; Watrin & Darwich, 2012). Skinner, whose model was known as radical behaviorism, advocated for a science of behavior through scientific explanation, as opposed to other behaviorists who supported traditional scientific experimental methods (Baum, 2017; Cooper et al., 2007; Lattal & Perone, 1998; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Skinner, 1938; Staddon, 2014). Skinner defined learning through the demonstration of a proper response after a particular environmental stimulus was presented and contended that the reinforcement of behaviors improved the likelihood of those behaviors being repeated (Cooper et al., 2007; Ertmer & Newby, 2013; Maag, 2016; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Skinner, 1938; Staddon, 2014). Despite the differences, Skinner's concept of

radical behaviorism was the direct intellectual successor to Watson's classical view of behaviorism (Hillner, 1984; Staddon, 2014).

Applied Behavior Analysis

Skinner proposed that as behaviors evaluated in the laboratory were regulated by operant and respondent doctrine, the behavior of humans in the real world likely would be affected as well (Dixon et al., 2012; Kearney, 2015; Lattal & Perone, 1998; Skinner, 1953). This concept thus prompted the discipline of applied behavior analysis, defined as the application of behavior principles for the resolving of practical problems (Cooper et al., 2007; Dixon et al, 2012; Kearney, 2015; Maag, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Watrin & Darwich, 2012). Applied behavior analysis was comprised of two types of conditioning: respondent and operant (Loovis, 2017; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1953). The features of applied behavior analysis that made it a unique discipline were the focus on research, importance of conditioning, direct treatment of problem behavior, programming for generality, and a concentration on the social environment (Cooper et al., 2007; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). The use of applied behavior analysis spanned a wide breadth of fields, including practice of operant intervention techniques in the field of education (Dixon et al., 2012; Kazdin, 2013).

Respondent conditioning. Ivan Pavlov, who conducted laboratory research on animals in the 1800s and 1900s, was one of the innovators in respondent conditioning, which was also called classical or Pavlovian conditioning (Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1984). Pavlov found that digestive processes of dogs could be stimulated by the sight or preparation of food without direct physical contact with the food (Kazdin, 2013; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1984). This type of learning came

to be referred to as respondent conditioning and transpired when a neutral stimulus, such as a bee buzzing, was combined with a stimulus that was unconditioned, such as the pain of a bee sting (Allen, 2007; Cooper et al., 2007; Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2017; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1953). The result of the combination usually led individuals to escape future encounters of bees buzzing (Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). As the evoked responses become automatic when the stimuli were presented, the responses were called unconditioned responses or respondents (Cooper et al., 2007; Kazdin, 2013; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Skinner, 1953).

Operant conditioning. Edward Thorndike, who conducted research on the ways animals learn, was one of the innovators of operant conditioning (Allen, 2007). Operant conditioning occurred when behaviors within environments produced consequences, such as a baby whose smiling increased because the smile increased the likelihood of being picked up (Cooper et al., 2007; Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Lattal & Perone, 1998; Loovis, 2017; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Shepherd & Linn, 2015; Skinner, 1953). Operant conditioning was also based on the principle of contingencies of reinforcement, which denoted the relationship linking behaviors and the environmental occurrences that affected behavior (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Kearney, 2015; Lattal & Perone, 1998; Maag, 2016; Meadan, Ayvazo, & Ostrosky, 2016; Meredith et al., 2014; Pierce & Cheney, 2013).

Contingencies of reinforcement consisted of the relationship among antecedent, behavior, and consequences; were delivered after the behavior; and were used to increase or reduce behavior (Boerke & Reitman, 2011; Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Dixon et al., 2012; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Kearney, 2015; Lattal & Perone, 1998; Loovis, 2017; Maag,

2016; Meadan et al., 2016; Meredith et al., 2014; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015; Pierce & Cheney, 2013; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). For example, if a phone rang (antecedent), someone answered the phone (behavior), and the consequence was a conversation between the caller and the person who answered the phone (Kazdin, 2013; Maag, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). The development of effective behavior programs depended on the awareness of the effects of antecedents and consequences in relation to behavior in addition to how antecedents and consequences were used to stimulate, progress, and maintain behavior (Kazdin, 2013; Meredith et al., 2014).

Antecedents. Antecedents were the conditions present before behaviors were displayed (Boerke & Reitman, 2011; Cooper et al., 2007; Kazdin, 2013; Maag, 2016; Meadan et al., 2016; Meredith et al, 2014; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015; Sheperd & Linn, 2015). Additionally, antecedents stimulated behaviors that assisted in the avoidance of punishment or the obtainment of reinforcement (Maag, 2016; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). Antecedents were not the cause of behavior and instead only served as cues for behavior (Kazdin, 2013; Maag, 2016; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). Furthermore, antecedents were distinguished by three categories: prompts, setting events, and discriminative stimuli (Kazdin, 2013). Prompts were specific antecedents that directed execution of specific behaviors, setting events were the contextual conditions that induced behavior, and discriminative stimuli were stimuli associated with reinforcement (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Kazdin, 2013).

Consequences. Consequences were the proceedings that follow behavior and included effects that proliferated, reduced, or had no impression on the behavior (Boerke & Reitman, 2011; Cooper et al., 2007; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Maag, 2016; Meadan et al.,

2016; Meredith et al, 2014; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015; Shepherd & Linn, 2015). Furthermore, consequences were categorized in one of two forms (Maag, 2016). First, a reinforcer referred to situations when a different stimulus was inserted into the environment (Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Meadan et al., 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). The second type of consequence, punisher, referred to instances when a stimulus that was already present was evaded, terminated, or separated from the environment (Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2013; Maag, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). The most rudimentary aspect of consequences were the relation to behavior (Kazdin, 2013). However, a mistaken application of behavioral interventions emphasized only consequences, which resulted in the belief that the practice of using behavioral interventions was ineffective (Kazdin, 2013; Meredith et al., 2014).

The Four Contingencies

For reinforcers to alter behavior, they were contingent upon the occurrence of the behavior (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Critchfield & Miller, 2017; Kazdin, 2013; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). There were four main contingencies of reinforcement: positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, positive punishment, and negative punishment (Dixon et al., 2012; Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015; Pierce & Cheney, 2013).

Reinforcement. Reinforcement involved stimuli that caused a behavior response to increase or maintain in frequency (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Cooper et al., 2007; Critchfield & Miller, 2017; Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Meadan et al., 2016; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). In other words, reinforcement was a combination of behavior and consequences (Ciapani & Schock,

2007; Dixon et al., 2012; Kazdin, 2013). The two types of reinforcers were termed positive and negative (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Cooper et al., 2007; Dixon et al., 2012; Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015; Pierce & Cheney, 2013).

Positive reinforcers were stimuli that were presented following a response that proliferated the frequency the reinforcers followed (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Cooper et al., 2007; Dixon et al., 2012; Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015). Additionally, positive reinforcers were stimuli that people valued and thus wanted as a result and included food, money, and praise (Kazdin, 2012; Loovis, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). Conversely, negative reinforcers were aversive stimuli that increased the likelihood of removal of behavior (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Cooper et al., 2007; Dixon et al., 2012; Foxall, 2016; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pfiffner & Haack, 2015; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). For example, if the fear of getting detention stopped a student from talking in class, then this fear served as a negative reinforcer (Loovis, 2016). Negative reinforcers often were misinterpreted as punishers; however, negative reinforcement included procedures and effects that were very different from punishers (Ciapani & Schock, 2007; Kazdin, 2013; Pierce & Cheney, 2013).

Punishment. Unlike reinforcers that increased the probability of behaviors, punishment was the introduction or elimination of a stimulus after a response, which in turn decreased the probability of that response (Cooper et al., 2007; Kazdin, 2012, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). In the everyday world, punishment was considered to be a penalty for committing a wrongful act (Kazdin, 2013; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). However, behaviorally, punishment was only considered operant if it

decreased the likelihood of repeated behaviors (Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). The two types of punishments were referred to as positive and negative (Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013).

Positive punishment consisted of the presentation of an adverse stimulus in response to an event (Cooper et al., 2007; Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). For example, spanking a child for misbehaving was considered positive punishment if the child no longer performed the undesired behavior (Kazdin, 2013; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). Contrarily, negative punishment was the removal of a favorable stimulus in response to an event (Cooper et al., 2007; Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). For instance, the loss of desired privileges for misbehavior was considered negative punishment (Kazdin, 2013; Loovis, 2016; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). Dixon et al. (2012) explained, "Skinner and many early behaviorists warned that punishment may bring about undesirable side effects and that striving to promote control of behavior through positive reinforcement as much as possible was a valuable goal in and of itself" (p. 7).

The Token Economy

Most educators had, even at the most basic level, some knowledge of rewards and reinforcement use on student behavior management, and many incorporated the use of rewards and reinforcement as part of classroom-management plans (Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett, & Little, 2004). The distribution of rewards such as stickers or pizza coupons for appropriate student behavior was employed for decades (Akin-Little et al., 2004; Slavin, 1997). However, the first known use of incentive-based behavior systems for classroom management was by Joseph Lancaster in England in the early 1800s (Kaestle, 1973;

Kazdin, 2012; Lancaster, 1803). Lancaster, who was responsible for the education of large enrollments of disadvantaged students, incorporated a ranking system where students and monitors were acknowledged for academic achievement and outstanding behavior (Kaestle, 1973; Kazdin, 2012; Lancaster, 1803).

Even though early incentive-based behavior systems such as Lancaster's supported the historical foundation for later applications, the earlier models were not built on the principles of operant conditioning (Kazdin, 2012). The first known incentive-based behavior system grounded in the operant conditioning theory was referred to as the token economy, defined as "formal descriptions of contingency relations" that were "intended to modify or influence behavior through the delivery of conditioned reinforcers" (Boerke & Reitman, 2011, p. 370). First used in the 1960s, the token economy was initially used in response to inadequate care for patients who were institutionalized (Boerke & Reitman, 2011; Kazdin, 1982). Aside from having operant conditioning roots, the token economy was also one of the first applications of applied behavior analysis (Boerke & Reitman, 2011).

An important aspect of the token economy was the distribution of token reinforcers to individuals who displayed desired behaviors (Zlomke & Zlomke, 2003). The token reinforcers were then exchanged for backup reinforcers such as food or special activities (Miltenberger, 1997). Much of the development of the token economy was credited to Ayllon and Azrin (1968), who researched its use on psychiatric patients, and Staats, Minke, and Butts (1970), who researched the correlation between use of the token economy and reading behavior in children. Through the 1970s and early 1980s, the first token-economy programs designed for classroom and whole-school use were

implemented (Boegli & Wasik, 1978; Kazdin, 1982; Rollins, McCandless, Thompson, & Brassell, 1974; M. Thompson, Brassell, Persons, Tucker, & Rollins, 1974).

Student Behavior Management

Even though effective discipline practices were significant criteria for the effective management of a school, researchers and other stakeholders disagreed in regards to what discipline methods educators should use (Eckes & Russo, 2012; Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). Traditionally, school officials used student behavior management systems that encouraged discipline techniques that controlled behavior, which, in turn, increased compliance through the use of rules and expectations (Flannery et al., 2013; Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002). One example was the perception that students complied with school rules out of fear of receiving consequences for noncompliance (Sugiai & Horner, 2002, 2006; Way, 2011). Such practices were characteristic of deterrence theorists who declared that punitive consequences were the most effective means of controlling behavior (Braga & Weisburd, 2011; Kleck & Barnes, 2013; Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014; Perry & Morris, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014).

Discipline policies, or codes of conduct, were the documents by which school officials transmited behavior expectations to the entire school community (Eckes & Russo, 2012; Fenning et al., 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2002). In a study of six states, Fenning et al. (2012) found that most discipline policies tended to be punitive and rarely provided proactive strategies that incorporated the teaching of behavioral expectations. Some of the overuse of punitive discipline consequences correlated with the lack of preservice training teachers received in behavior management, as teachers often

expressed inadequacies in behavior-management techniques and interventions (Freeman et al., 2014; Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010; Wehby & Kern, 2014). These punitive consequences include detention, Saturday school, ISS, OSS, and expulsion from school (Allman & Slate, 2011; Eckes & Russo, 2012; Flannery et al., 2012; Monahan, VanDerhei, Bechtold, & Cauffman, 2014; Osher et al., 2010; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Tyre et al., 2011). However, the use of punitive consequences offered temporary solutions to what were often long-term problems (Osher et al., 2010; Simson, 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Exclusionary Discipline

Researchers found that the exclusionary discipline consequences of OSS and expulsion had more negative consequences than positive (Fabelo et al., 2011; Morgan, Salomon, Plotkin, & Cohen, 2014; Pane, Rocco, Miller, & Salmon, 2014; Simson, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014; Skiba, Chung, et al., 2014). School officials commonly utilized suspensions and expulsions as a means of sustaining safe conditions within schools (Flannery et al., 2013; Morgan et al., 2014). In a study of over 900,000 students, Fabelo et al. (2011) found that 59.6% of students received at least one exclusionary discipline consequence between Grades 7 and 12, and half of the students who received these consequences had at least four violations that resulted in exclusionary discipline.

Despite the common use of exclusionary discipline techniques, further problems resulted from the disallowance of these students to attend school (Fabelo et al., 2011; Morgan et al., 2014; Pane et al., 2014; Perry & Morris, 2014; Simson, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014; Steinberg, Allensworth, & Johnson, 2013). First, students who were excluded from school suffered academically due to a loss of instructional time

(Fabelo et al., 2011; Hilberth & Slate, 2012; Morgan et al., 2014; Whisman & Hammer, 2014). Fabelo et al. (2011) reported that students who received at least one exclusionary discipline consequence were much more likely to repeat a grade level than those who never received similar consequences. Furthermore, students who lost instructional time due to disciplinary issues were more inclined to have excessive absences as well as future suspensions, which increased absences and risk of dropping out (Morgan et al., 2014). Ultimately, school officials who overused suspensions and expulsions created a negative school climate where students felt insecurity about discipline consequences, undermining the intended purpose of the consequences: to maintain positive learning conditions (Morgan et al., 2014; Perry & Morris, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, et al, 2014; Steinberg et al., 2013).

One unintentional result of exclusionary discipline practices was the increased risk of contact with the juvenile justice system due to criminal misbehavior (Monahan et al., 2014; Scott & Saucedo, 2013; Simson, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014; Vanderhaar, Munoz, & Petrosko, 2014). This concept, referred to as the school-to-prison pipeline, was defined as the processes and policies of a school that led to student removal for disciplinary infractions, which created a higher risk for criminal offenses (Scott & Saucedo, 2013; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014). The elevated likelihood of arrest after receiving an exclusionary discipline consequence was universal among all races, ethnicities, and genders (Monahan et al., 2014). In comparison to students who had no discipline consequences at school, students who were disciplined by school officials were more likely to be charged by police for criminal violations (Fabelo et al., 2011). Furthermore, arrest within a month of suspensions or expulsions was much more likely

for students who received these consequences than for students who did not (Monahan et al., 2014; Vanderhaar et al., 2014). Even though a link existed between the use of exclusionary discipline techniques and increased risk of committing crimes, it was implausible to reason that the use of exclusionary discipline techniques led directly to criminal justice outcomes (Flannery, Fenning, Kato, & McIntosh, 2014; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014a). Instead, criminal outcomes were more likely a result of the short-term consequences associated with exclusionary techniques, such as the loss of educational opportunities and negative school perceptions, which led to poor academic achievement (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014a).

OSS. Despite an abundance of use, OSS was ineffective in eradicating problematic behaviors or teaching desired behaviors (Bear, 2012; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). One reason was that many students were not positively affected by OSS (Bear, 2012; Ryan & Goodram, 2013; Vanderhaar et al., 2014). Much like imprisonment in the criminal justice system, suspension was used by school officials to gain social control by removing students from learning environments (Perry & Morris, 2014). As a result of time spent out of school, the academic achievement of students who received OSS suffered (Flannery et al., 2012; Perry & Morris, 2014). Additionally, some students perceived suspension as a school holiday, thus reinforcing the likelihood that problematic behaviors persisted (Chin, Dowdy, Jimerson, & Rime, 2012). Furthermore, students who were suspended repeatedly exhibited increased risks of truancy, creating the inadvertent effect of driving students out of school (Flannery et al., 2012; Rumberger, 2011). Finally, in a research study in a large metropolitan school district in Kentucky, Perry and Morris

(2014) discovered schools with high rates of OSS also had high proportions of nonsuspended students with low academic achievement.

The use of OSS was also found to cause a negative school climate by creating mistrust, apprehension, and uneasiness even for students who were not considered discipline problems (Bear, 2012; Perry & Morris, 2014; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012). Many suspended students could neither grasp the consequences of the actions that resulted in the suspensions nor view the suspensions in the manner school administrators preferred (Chin et al., 2012; Moreno & Gaytán, 2012; Skiba et al., 2011). Typically, educators failed to address the underlying problems that resulted in suspensions and instead utilized the consequence as a short-term solution (Chin et al., 2012; Moreno & Gaytán, 2012). Therefore, those students prone to problematic behaviors should have received interventions and supports that addressed the causes of the behaviors along with the promotion of positive school climate and self-discipline (Bear, 2012; Moreno & Gaytán, 2012).

Discipline practices utilized to establish self-discipline, as opposed to student management, were more closely associated with the aim of creating high-character students (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). Such procedures included teaching self-discipline through student-centered methods within the framework of programs that incorporated the prevention of problematic behaviors and the development of social skills (Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014). Despite the results of researchers who found negative consequences in the use of OSS as a form of school discipline, school officials deemed OSS necessary for school safety because the use of OSS assisted in providing order and a conducive learning environment (Perry & Morris, 2014; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012).

Expulsion. Certain aspects of school expulsion policies, such as mandatory expulsion for firearm possession, were required by law; however, many other expulsion policies were determined at the district level and included offenses such as drugs, alcohol, violence, and nonfirearm weapons (Bruhn, Gorsh, Hannan, & Hirsch, 2014; Fabelo et al., 2011; Welch & Payne, 2012). Due to the discretionary nature of the employment of expulsion, its use as a disciplinary tactic increased over time (Fabelo et al., 2011). However, the regular application of expulsion did not create a climate that was any more conducive to the academic success of students when compared to schools with officials who used expulsion less often (Fabelo et al., 2011). School administrators tended to follow the rationale of using expulsion as a means of removing problematic students from classrooms so teachers could teach the other students without distractions, even though this was not an effective practice (J. Thompson, 2016).

Alternative schools. Theoretically, alternative school programs were constructed to serve the educational needs of students unable to be served in a traditional school environment because of disciplinary problems (Booker & Mitchell, 2011; Kim, 2011; Vanderhaar et al., 2014). In the early use, alternative schools were reserved for students who mainly violated zero-tolerance policies; however, many students were eventually placed in these schools for a variety of discretionary behavior violations (Booker & Mitchell, 2011; Kim, 2011). As a result, the placement in alternative schools of students labeled as unruly and dangerous became a regular occurrence (Vanderhaar et al., 2014). Thus, education leaders advocated for alternative schools based on the premise that the placement at alternative schools reduced student expulsions, maintained the safety at traditional schools, and lowered criminal offenses by juveniles (Vanderhaar et al., 2014).

Despite the theoretical purposes of alternative schools, problems existed in many of these programs. First, Vanderhaar et al. (2014) found that alternative school placements correlated with a high probability of criminal offenses outside of the school. Furthermore, regardless of the reasons for placement, one of the goals of alternative education program facilitators was to improve student behavior so that the students could return to traditional school environments (Simonsen, Jeffrey-Pearsall, Sugai, & Mccurdy, 2016). Booker and Mitchell (2011) found that White students, who typically had more extreme behaviors, were likely to be reformed; however, ethnic-minority and older students were more likely to return to alternative settings. Additionally, many alternative education programs lacked the educational resources of traditional schools (Morgan et al., 2014). As a result, these students failed to receive an adequate education, and society as a whole incurred the negative consequences of increased crime rates and unskilled workforce laborers that subsequently occurred because of inadequate education (Geronimo, 2011).

PBIS

The effects of the increased pressure on school officials to establish safe and orderly environments led to an increase in the adoption of preventative forms of discipline at both the state and district levels (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Bradshaw, Reinke, Brown, Bevans, & Leaf, 2008; Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2006). Students spent over 14,000 hours in school environments from kindergarten through high school graduation, thus providing incomparable opportunities for educators to teach and reinforce practices that further the academic, social, and behavioral development of students (Mathews, McIntosh, Frank, & May, 2013). One such model was PBIS, which was developed in the

1980s by researchers at the University of Oregon who were seeking an alternate means of behavior management that did not involve punitive consequences for individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders (Bradshaw, Koth, Bevans, Ialongo, & Leaf, 2008; Johnston, Foxx, Jacobson, Green, & Mulick, 2006; Kincaid et al., 2015; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). In 1997, IDEA was amended to specifically mention PBIS as a mechanism for appropriately addressing behavior needs; PBIS was again included in the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA (Bruhn et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The inclusion of PBIS, the only behavior technique specifically mentioned, in the law was based on the perception in Congress that PBIS is a proactive instrument for responding to students with disabilities and behavioral needs (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

The 1997 reauthorization of IDEA also created a grant for the establishment of a national PBIS center to assist schools with the distribution and support of PBIS practices with students diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders (Johnston et al., 2006; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). This center was part of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and was termed the Office of Special Education Technical Assistance Center on PBIS (Johnston et al., 2006; Kincaid et al., 2015). Initially, PBIS centered on the behaviors of individual students; however, the Office of Special Education Technical Assistance Center on PBIS altered directions to emphasize behavior supports for all students in a school-wide setting (Kincaid et al., 2015; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

PBIS Framework

PBIS was not a manualized program (Flannery et al., 2013; Horner, 2013; Kelm et al., 2014). Instead, PBIS was employed as a framework for school officials to adopt practices that supported positive academic and behavioral achievement of all students (Flannery et al., 2013; Horner, 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; Yeung et al., 2016). The implementation framework of PBIS was outlined to augment both the social and academic skills of all students through the utilization of data in the decision-making process for choosing, incorporating, and monitoring the progress of research-based behavioral interventions as well as the organization of resources and entities to enhance application fidelity (Carroll et al., 2012; Coffey & Horner, 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Simonsen et al., 2016; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012; Yeung et al., 2016).

The goal of PBIS creators was the alteration of school environments through the creation of enhanced systems and procedures that inspired positive change in the actions of staff, thus prompting positive changes in student behavior and school climate (Bradshaw, Koth, et al., 2008; Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Carroll et al., 2012; Kelm et al., 2014). Additionally, PBIS originators envisioned a program with clear behavioral expectations, incentives for students who met the expectations, promotion of positive interactions between both students and staff in the school, and incorporation of staff decision-making based on data (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Coffey & Horner, 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Freeman et al., 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Yeung et al., 2016). Data were also used to produce feedback and construct goals for the facilitation of PBIS (Kelm et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Yeung et al., 2016). Ultimately, the framework of PBIS was formed to help create a predictable and

reinforcing school climate for both students and staff as well as a system that allowed for the organization and monitoring of interventions and supports so that students were afforded early access when needed (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Freeman et al., 2015).

An assumption of PBIS implementers was that every student who attended school needed some level of support, dependent upon the problem behaviors each student exhibited (O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Sugai & Horner, 2002). The framework was comprised of three tiers that included interventions for whole schools, individual classrooms, and specific students as needed (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012; Carroll et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; Kincaid et al., 2015; Nocera et al., 2014; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Sugia & Horner, 2006; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015; Wehby & Kern, 2014; Yeung et al., 2016). These tiers were classified as Tier 1, universal; Tier 2, targeted, and Tier 3, intensive (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al., 2012; Bruhn et al., 2014; Carroll et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; McCamish, Reynolds, Algozzine, & Cusumano, 2015; Nocera et al., 2014; Simonsen et al., 2016; Sugai & Horner, 2006; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2015; Yeung et al., 2016). For school officials instituting PBIS, the goal of this tiered approach was the prevention of troublesome behaviors and the improvement of the organizational climate through the creation and sustainment of support systems (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Bruhn et al., 2014; Carr et al., 2002; Carroll et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; Simonsen et al., 2012; Waasdorp, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2012).

PBIS and Applied Behavior Analysis

PBIS was engrained in the analytic tradition of applied behavior as well as a strong body of research that focused on individual behaviors as well as the environments in which the behaviors were observed (Sugai & Horner, 2002). Ultimately, PBIS incorporated two major tenets of applied behavior analysis (Carr et al., 2002). First, the originators of PBIS utilized the conceptual framework of applied behavior analysis that was germane to behavior change (Carr et al., 2002). Along with applied behavior analysis, PBIS incorporated the three-term contingency: stimulus-response-reinforcing consequence (Carr et al., 2002; Miltenberger, 1997). However, PBIS implementers focused more on environmental design (stimulus) as the vehicle for producing change (Carr et al., 2002).

The second contribution applied behavior analysis made to PBIS was the foundation of assessment and intervention strategies built on applied behavior analysis principles but reproduced in a more positive and collaborative framework (Carr, 2002; Safran & Oswald, 2003). Within the PBIS framework, the focus, use of data, and expectation of discernable change relevant to applied behavior analysis were altered to become more conventional to professionals in educational settings (Safran & Oswald, 2003). Examples related to applied behavior analysis included the instruction of social skills, token economies, positive reinforcement, and function-based support (Sugai & Horner, 2006).

Tier 1/SWPBIS

Primary supports included all school-related settings and incorporated all students, staff, and family members of the school, appropriately termed SWPBIS (Carroll et al., 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2006). The goal of SWPBIS implementers for the primary tier was the prevention of problematic behaviors for all students through the creation of effective learning environments (Horner & Sugai, 2015; Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2006). The focus of this tier was on the instruction, monitoring, and appropriate use of social skills as well as the provision of proper recognition through a system of acknowledgement for appropriate behaviors (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; McIntosh, Moniz, Craft, Golby, & Steinwand-Deschambeault, 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Safran & Oswald, 2003; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012; Simonsen et al., 2012; Simonsen et al., 2016; Solomon, Tobin, & Schutte, 2015; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2016; Waasdorp et al., 2012; Wehby & Kern, 2014).

The first step in the implementation of SWPBIS was the creation of three to five school-wide expectations, beliefs, and procedures because these features were the building blocks of sustained SWPBIS programs (Fallon, O'Keefe, & Sugai, 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Horner & Sugai, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; Mathews et al., 2013; McCamish et al., 2015; Nocera et al., 2014; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Simonsen et al., 2016; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Waasdorp et al., 2012; Wehby & Kern, 2014). Even in systems where reactionary discipline was emphasized, reactionary techniques were futile without clear student expectations (Bruhn et al., 2014). For example, if school officials chose responsibility, kindness, and respect as behavioral expectations for a school, the

students were taught how these expectations applied in hallways, classrooms, and every other setting within the school composition, and behavioral matrices were placed around the school to remind students about the expectations as well as to provide a means for staff members to maintain consistency in the acknowledgment of appropriate behaviors (Kelm et al., 2014; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015). Students were acknowledged for appropriate behaviors through a focus on adult verbal praise as well as some type of tangible reward such as a ticket or token used for prizes like school supplies (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015). Furthermore, procedures and consequences for handling both minor and major rule violations were established (Sugai & Horner, 2002).

The next phase of SWPBIS implementation, which was vital in encouraging positive student behaviors, was the practice of teaching behavioral expectations (Fallon et al., 2012; Gietz & McIntosh, 2014). These expectations were modeled and taught by school staff regardless of whether students already knew and understand the expectations (Bruhn et al., 2014). Not all students were afforded exposure and opportunities to appropriate behavior modeling outside of the school environment, and thus all students were provided these (Bruhn et al., 2014). In so doing, ambiguity was reduced and a more consistent environment established (Bruhn et al., 2014; Lane, Menzies, Oakes, & Kalberg, 2009). To make instruction relevant, school staffs had to consider both the age and cultural relevance of students to insure positive student outcomes (Bruhn et al., 2013; Sugai, O'Keefe, & Fallon, 2012).

A recognition system for positive student behaviors was another key component of SWPBIS (Bruhn et al., 2014; Mathews et al., 2013). This approach on positive

recognition differed from past approaches that only acknowledged negative behaviors (Bruhn et al., 2014). Tangible items such as pencils and toys as well as nontangible rewards such as homework passes were used as part of the recognition system (Bruhn et al., 2014; Mathews et al., 2013). Both types were used because an organization of both tangible and nontangible rewards was found to be most effective when the system promoted repeated and specific positive recognition by teachers of students (Mathews et al., 2013). Students developed positive attitudes about meeting behavioral expectations after receiving praise for demonstrating positive behaviors, which made the students more likely to display those behaviors in the future (Bruhn et al., 2014). The objective of using extrinsic rewards was for students to experience behavioral success to the point that success became self-supporting, which in turn reduced the need for extrinsic rewards in the future (Bruhn et al., 2014).

Another aspect of SWPBIS was a working team of five to six members, including teachers and administrators responsible for the management and support of SWPBIS processes (Flannery et al., 2013; Waasdorp et al., 2012). Specifically, the SWPBIS team consisted of various building-level roles across grade levels, specialization, and administrative involvement, who oversaw the gathering and examination of data to ascertain problems and preserve staff and student steadfastness through continuous communication (Clonan, McDougal, Clark, & Davison, 2007; Flannery et al., 2013). Teaming was identified as a vital variable to sustained SWPBIS implementation (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Horner, 2013; McIntosh, Kim, Mercer, Strickland-Cohen, & Horner, 2015; McIntosh et al., 2013; Sugai & Horner, 2006). Furthermore, the practice of school-wide sharing by SWPBIS teams strengthened data-based decision-making by staff

members outside the team and reinforced the perceptions of staff members that SWPBIS processes lead to positive outcomes (McIntosh et al., 2015).

Generally, 80–90% of students responded positively to SWPBIS methods (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Flannery et al., 2013; Horner & Sugai, 2015; Solomon et al., 2015; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015; Yeung et al., 2016). However, not all students responded positively to primary tier supports (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Flannery et al., 2013; Freeman et al., 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; McCamish et al., 2015; Simonsen et al., 2016; Solomon et al., 2015; Wehby & Kern, 2014). As a result, behavior data was monitored to determine which students were in need of additional supports (Freeman et al., 2015; Horner & Sugai, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; McCamish et al., 2015; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Simonsen et al., 2016; Waasdorp et al., 2012; Wehby & Kern, 2014).

Even though the complete PBIS model encompassed the primary, secondary, and tertiary tiers, most of the more than 21,000 schools that incorporated PBIS only implemented the primary tier elements because of the additional resources needed to implement the additional tiers (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Horner & Sugai, 2015). When primary tier supports were implemented with fidelity, fewer students needed the assistance of the additional tiers; therefore, a decreased number of students in need of upper tiered support was indicative of an effective primary tier structure (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al., 2015).

Tier 2

As an aspect of best instructional practices, educators did not use a unilateral approach to academic instruction (Chin et al., 2012; Landrum & McDuffie, 2010).

Instead, individual student needs such as ability level, learning abilities, and intellectual development were considered when forming instructional plans and methods (Chin et al., 2012; Landrum & McDuffie, 2010; McIntosh, Bohanon, & Goodman, 2010). The PBIS concept incorporated a similar approach to teaching behavior because, like academics, students differed in behavioral knowledge and capacity (Adams, Womack, Shatzer, & Caldarella, 2010; Chin et al., 2012). Similar to the response to intervention method, student lack of response to primary tier strategies indicated the need for increased supports to help the students be successful (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; McIntosh et al., 2010; Nocera et al., 2014).

The secondary tier was designed to provide an increased intervention focus in small-group settings for students who exhibited problematic behaviors but were not reactive to primary interventions (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Carroll et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Sharkey & Fenning, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2006; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2015; Yeung et al., 2016). The use of secondary tier interventions widened the rudimentary logic of PBIS through the provision of additional targeted opportunities for direct instruction and feedback in addition to the alteration of environmental structures to proliferate the probability of success (Yeung et al., 2016). The emphasis of these interventions was the development of self-control strategies or the enhancement of social skills as well as improved academic performance (Wehby & Kern, 2014; Yeung et al., 2016).

Examples of secondary tier interventions included check-in-check-out with an adult mentor and social skills groups (Kalberg, Lane, & Lambert, 2012; Wehby & Kern,

2014). Students receiving Tier 2 interventions were identified through data analysis such as discipline referrals or the absence of academic progress and typically included 10–15% of the student population (Bruhn et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; McCamish et al., 2015; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Secondary tier supports were advantageous to educators because they were a cost-effective and efficient means of delivering interventions (O'Neill & Bundock, 2015).

Tier 3

Students on the tertiary tier were those who displayed intensive problematic behaviors, were unresponsive to primary or secondary supports, and were administered interventions on a more individualized level as a result (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Bruhn et al., 2014; Carroll et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2015; Yeung et al., 2016). Students who required tertiary interventions often had intricate behavior histories, leading to the need for functional behavioral assessments to determine the reason for the students' problem behaviors as well as individualized behavior plans (Kern & Wehby, 2014; O'Neill, Bundock, Kladis, & Hawken, 2015; Wehby & Kern, 2014; Yeung et al., 2016). Both secondary and tertiary tiered supports were evidence-based approaches that were substantiated in altering student behaviors and were provided to students by staff members other than classroom teachers (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al., 2015; Carroll et al., 2012).

Typically, 1–5% of the students within a school required tertiary supports (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al., 2015; Bruhn et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Horner & Sugai, 2015; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015; Yeung et al., 2016). However, the goal of

school officials was the full implementation of primary and secondary supports prior to the implementation of tertiary supports to decrease the number of students needing Tier 3 interventions (Flannery et al., 2013; Horner & Sugai, 2015).

Fidelity of SWPBIS

The effectiveness of programs was often undermined in the contexts of schools because many educational programs were implemented differently in real-world contexts than originally intended, which made sustainability difficult (Molloy, Moore, Trail, Van Epps, & Hopfer, 2013). As a process, sustainability was defined as the involvement of a group of structural systems and practices that had similar relationships and involved both the duration of implementation and the effectiveness of the implementation (Yeung et al., 2016). The effectiveness of SWPBIS interventions was difficult to assess without fidelity (Simonsen et al., 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2006). Additionally, without ensuring fidelity, the use of evidence-based practices was futile because school personnel did not transform the innovations into positive outcomes (Coffey & Horner, 2012).

However, instituting systems-level practices within schools with fidelity consumed a large amount of time and external supports (McIntosh et al., 2013). Additionally, changing school contexts created unpredictable environments not conducive to systems-level changes (McIntosh et al., 2013). Nonetheless, achieving implementation fidelity for SWPBIS was necessary because high fidelity in implementation was shown to increase overall effectiveness through reductions in ODRs and exclusionary discipline techniques, especially when compared to schools with low fidelity rates (Bohanon et al., 2012; Bohanon & Wu, 2014; Simonsen et al., 2012; Vincent & Tobin, 2011). Kelm et al. (2014) found that even when a portion of essential

elements was implemented prior to full implementation, positive student outcomes increased when fidelity increased.

The assessment of implementation fidelity was also vital to insure the plan was implemented as designed, to assess student responsiveness, and to allocate financial and personnel resources for the professional development of staff and student interventions (Bruhn et al., 2013). Without the use of fidelity checks, the possibility of compromised effectiveness of the critical features of SWPBIS increased (Kelm et al., 2014). Through the systematic collection and review of data, school officials reviewed the quality of implementation, examining the specific practices that required more attention (Kelm et al., 2014). In order to ensure overall success, SWPBIS leaders at schools with high fidelity rates used a focused approach prior to implementation (Bohanon et al., 2012; Bohanon & Wu, 2014; Flannery et al., 2014). For example, a foundation of student and staff buy-in was built, and solid team practices, data processes, and administrative support were achieved prior to implementation (Flannery et al., 2014; McIntosh et al., 2013).

Flannery et al. (2014) also discovered that schools that implemented SWPBIS with high degrees of fidelity, as indicated by SET scores, had higher reductions in problem behaviors, which suggested programs that closely correlated with the components of SWPBIS had better results. Additionally, in a study of four Midwestern schools, Bohanon and Wu (2014) found that the schools with a more focused approach to exploring, installing, and implementing SWPBIS by conducting needs assessments and professional learning prior to implementation had higher SET scores than those without a focused approach. Similarly, reductions in ODRs correlated with staff professional

development on expected behaviors and the acknowledgement of those behaviors, which led to the conclusion that improved student behavior is contingent on the use of professional development in the support of adult behavior (Bohanon et al., 2012). Finally, Molloy et al. (2013) discovered that reward systems, violation systems, and the teaching of expectations and behaviors, when implemented with fidelity, correlated with reductions in ODRs for aggressive, defiant, and drug-related conduct for elementary, middle, and high school students.

SWPBIS Fidelity Instruments

Fidelity checks for SWPBIS that assessed the effectiveness of school practices were necessary because the possibility of compromised efficacy of the critical features of SWPBIS increased with the absence of these audits (Kelm et al., 2014). Through the use of fidelity instruments, school officials reviewed the quality of implementation through the collection and review of data, allowing for the examination of practices that required more attention (George & Childs, 2012; Kelm et al., 2014; McIntosh et al., 2013). However, no fidelity instrument had the capacity to measure all student performance variables; therefore, multiple evaluation tools were needed (George & Childs, 2012). The SET and the BoQ were two of the most widely used SWPBIS fidelity instruments and were created to measure implementation fidelity on a broad scale (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Solomon et al., 2015). For example, Freeman et al. (2015) used both the SET and BoQ because nationally school leaders used both instruments to guide SWPBIS processes. Additionally, school leaders widely use both instruments during the SWPBIS implementation process, providing a thorough comprehension of the level of each

school's implementation over time to assist with action planning (Bruhn et al., 2014; Freeman et al., 2015).

The SET. The SET (Horner et al., 2004) was used extensively as a SWPBIS measure of fidelity because of the capability to produce valid and reliable data when administered by a trained observer who did not work within the school (Fallon et al., 2014; Simonsen et al., 2012). Completed once per year, the SET was used to measure the implementation fidelity of schools' SWPBIS systems by assessing seven areas: expectations defined; behavioral expectations taught; positive acknowledgement procedures; procedures for consequences distributed to students for failing to meet expectations; the use of behavioral data in decision-making, monitoring, and assessment; management; and district support (Fallon et al., 2014; Simonsen et al., 2012; Solomon et al., 2015; Todd et al., 2012). The goal of SWPBIS implementers was for schools to achieve a minimum of 80% fidelity on the SET in each tier (Solomon et al., 2015; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

The BoQ. The BoQ was an evidence-based evaluation tool completed annually to assess school implementation of Tier 1 practices over 53 items (Childs, Kincaid, George, 2011; George & Childs, 2012). The creation of the BoQ was in response to the Florida Department of Education's request to assess the outcomes of schools implementing SWPBIS (George & Childs, 2012). The BoQ was similar to the SET in that both evaluate school-wide practices; however, the BoQ also assessed classroom practices (Childs et al., 2011; Fallon et al., 2014). Additionally, the BoQ was conducted by the SWPBIS leadership team at each school rather than by an outside evaluator like the SET (Fallon et al., 2014).

ODRs. Schools officials employing SWPBIS were urged to use ODRs as an aspect of SWPBIS data collection, and as a result ODRs became one of the most commonly used data sources in SWPBIS schools (Bruhn et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; Vincent & Tobin, 2011). ODRs were written documents of behavior issues that were compiled regularly and used by school staffs to record and track major school-wide behavior problems such as physical violence and defiance (Flannery et al., 2013; Kelm et al., 2014; Molloy et al., 2013). Along with the misbehaviors, the forms included the time, place, and the probable motivation for the actions (Bruhn et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013).

Even though ODRs were used as a means of assessing school-wide behavior for many schools that employed SWPBIS, the use of ODRs as a method of monitoring SWPBIS fidelity included limitations (Clonan et al., 2007; Flannery et al., 2013). For example, the reported behaviors were limited to those disclosed to the office, and school personnel used referral procedures differently, resulting in different resolutions in different schools (Flannery et al., 2013). Teacher classroom-management problems and student ethnicity also posed potential validity issues with ODR use (Pas, Bradshaw, & Mitchell, 2011).

However, in regards to ODR reliability, Pas et al. (2011) examined ODRs by comparing information system reports and teacher-produced reports from 335 classrooms in 21 elementary schools and found an accurate correlation between the reports. The researchers also tested the validity of ODRs by comparing student ODRs to the results of the Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaptation Checklist. They found that students with multiple ODRs were rated as having more disruptive behaviors and attention

difficulties on the Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaptation Checklist, which validated that student receipt of ODRs was based on behavior as opposed to classroom management or ethnicity factors (Pas et al., 2011).

Additionally, procedures such as professional development for staff increased the credibility of ODR use in assessing school-wide behavioral performance (Flannery et al., 2013). When ODRs were used in a systematic process, useful data were provided that could be used to advance and assess interventions (Flannery et al., 2013). Even though ODRs had limitations, their use as a data measurement tool, at least minimally, provided a gauge of student behavior within schools (Clonan et al., 2007).

SWPBIS in Elementary and Middle Schools

Much of the SWPBIS research was conducted at the elementary and middle school levels, and the researchers discovered that when implemented with fidelity, the use of SWPBIS helped to effect positive changes in student behavior (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Guillory, 215; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; Vincent & Tobin, 2011; Waasdorp et al., 2012). For example, Kelm et al. (2014) found total ODRs decreased by 266 from Year 1 (partial implementation) to Year 2 (full implementation), and OSS assignments were reduced by half in Year 2. Similarly, in a research study conducted in an urban kindergarten through Grade 8 school over 3 years of SWPBIS implementation, Guillory (2015) found that students who had been exposed to SWPBIS elements showed decreases in OSS for the first 2 years and decreases in ISS all 3 years. Furthermore, Nocera et al. (2014) conducted a study of how the implementation of SWPBIS in a Connecticut middle school impacted the top eight discipline referrals: fighting or physical aggression, insubordination, classroom

disruptions, inappropriate behavior, failing to serve detention, skipping class, tardies, and disrespect to staff. Over the first 2 years of SWPBIS implementation, Nocera et al. discovered decreases in each of the infraction areas, which accounted for a total decrease in ODRs of 40%.

In a study of 37 elementary schools nationwide, Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al. (2015) discovered that students with great propensity for disruptive behaviors who attended schools that implemented SWPBIS received ODRs at a significantly lower rate when compared to students with similar behaviors in schools that did not incorporate SWPBIS. The researchers noted that even though the test schools only implemented Tier 1 strategies, school officials likely also utilized other interventions for students with more comprehensive needs, which might have skewed the results. Additionally, while examining the correlation between implementation in specific domains and exclusionary discipline techniques, Vincent and Tobin (2011) noted that classrooms characteristic of stronger SWPBIS implementation had significantly lower OSS rates. These results were similar to those of Simonsen et al. (2012) in a study of Illinois schools. Simonsen et al. (2012) found that even though all schools that implemented SWPBIS achieved lower rates of ODRs, regardless of implementation fidelity, only higher implementation fidelity correlated with lower rates of OSS and total suspensions.

Waasdorp et al. (2012) and Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al. (2012) indicated that earlier exposure to SWPBIS correlated with improved behavioral gains. In a 4-year study of the effects of SWPBIS on bullying and rejection behaviors of students who were in kindergarten through second grade in Year 1 of the study, Waasdorp et al. found that students in higher grades who were exposed to SWPBIS displayed less bullying and

rejection behaviors than students in the comparison schools, regardless of race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al. (2012) discovered that the effects of Tier 1 supports were generally strongest with students who started the trial in kindergarten and suggested that the earlier students were exposed to SWPBIS, the higher the probability of increased benefits. The researchers also concluded that another possible explanation for the increased positive effects with children who began the trial in kindergarten was that younger children were adaptable and more responsive to expectations and positive reinforcements than older children (Bradshaw, Waasdorp, et al., 2012). Additionally, Guillory (2015) found that students exposed to all 3 years of PBIS implementation showed the greatest improvements. Relevant studies are summarized in Table A1 in Appendix A.

Along with benefits in behavior, researchers also identified correlations between SWPBIS and academics in elementary and middle schools (Guillory, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014). Table 1 summarizes the research. In the Guillory (2015) study, students who were exposed to SWPBIS showed increased reading achievement all 3 years. Kelm et al. (2014) found that the standardized testing results of fourth-grade students increased 44% in reading, 56% in writing, and 25% in math from the partial implementation year to full implementation. These scores were drastically higher than the test results of students in other schools in the district (Kelm et al., 2014). Seventh-grade math scores improved by 35% for the school and just 4% for the district; however, seventh-grade writing scores only increased 9% in comparison to 7% for the district. Overall, a reduction of 266 ODRs represented a savings of 3,900 minutes of school staff time and 7,980 minutes of student classroom time that was lost during the partial implementation year to behavior problems

(Kelm et al., 2014). Furthermore, Simonsen et al. (2012) discovered that higher implementation fidelity correlated with higher percentages of students meeting expectations on Illinois standardized achievement tests.

Table 1
Studies of School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) and Improvements in Elementary and Middle School Academics

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Guillory, S. (2015). *The effects of positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) Tier 1 on student behavior: A case study* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 10008842)	Evaluation of PBIS as an alternative for behavior improvement	1 urban public pre-kindergarten through Grade 8 school	Quantitative: descriptive analysis of (ODRs), suspensions, and reading test scores; comparison pre- to postimplemen-tation Qualitative: interviews	Decreases in (OSS) for first 2 years; decreases in in-school suspensions all 3 years. Students exposed to SWPBIS for all 3 years showed the greatest improvements. Students who were exposed to SWPBIS showed improvements in reading scores.
Kelm, J. L., McIntosh, K., & Cooley, S. (2014). Effects of implementing school-wide positive behavioural interventions and supports on problem behaviour and academic achievement in a Canadian elementary school. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, *29*, 195–212.	To determine if higher implemen-tation fidelity led to increased positive outcomes	1 small elementary/ middle school in British Columbia, Canada	Quantitative: changes in behavioral and academic outcomes; student perception surveys Qualitative: interviews on teacher perceptions of PBIS 2-year study	Decreases in ODRs over 2 years; increased achievement for fourth graders; decreased achievement for seventh graders. Fidelity of implementation related to improvements. Positive perception data correlated with fidelity of implementation.

The demographics of school student populations such as race and socioeconomic status were hypothesized as risk factors for sustained implementation because both were associated with a higher probability of inconsistent implementation and desertion (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011). However, through the research of 860 schools implementing SWPBIS, McIntosh et al. (2015) countered that neither race nor socioeconomic status was significantly related to sustained implementation. Additionally, in the Nocera et al. (2014) study, even though the suspensions of African American and Hispanic students were still disproportionate to those of European American students, the researchers discovered large decreases in ODRs and suspensions, including for African American and Hispanic students, despite 50% of the student population receiving free or reduced-price lunch and 40% of the total student population being considered ethnic minority. The Nocera et al. study is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Study of Race and Socioeconomics as Nonfactors in Sustained Elementary and Middle School Implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS)

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Nocera, E. J., Whitbread, K. M., & Nocera, G. P. (2014). Impact of school-wide positive behavior supports on student behavior in the middle grades. *Research in Middle Level Education*, *37*(8), 1–14.	To determine if implementation of SWPBIS results in improved academic and behavioral outcomes	1 middle school; 50% free and reduced-price lunch; 40% ethnic minority	Quantitative: *t* test compared office discipline referrals (ODRs), suspensions, climate surveys in study year to baseline year Qualitative: teacher and administrator interviews	ODR decreases of 40% over 2 years. SWPBIS correlated with impact on the top 8 discipline infractions. Large reductions in ODRs among ethnic-minority students although still disproportionate compared to White students.

SWPBIS in High Schools

During Barack Obama's presidency, the reform of high schools was a national priority, as President Obama aimed for the United States to have the most college graduates on earth by 2020 (Flannery et al., 2013; U.S. Department of Education, 2011). Likewise, legislators prioritized high school improvement (National Association of Governors, 2011). Even though high schools posed many potential areas of improvement, student behavior remained a concern because of the direct influence on learning environments and the facilitation of instruction (Flannery et al., 2013).

Among the more than 22,000 schools that implemented SWPBIS, only 12% were high schools (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Horner, 2013). One reason for the lack of high school SWPBIS utilization was high school implementation was more difficult than in elementary and middle schools (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013). However, the increased pressure placed on high schools from state and federal governments to improve student achievement, student preparedness for college and the workforce, and dropout rates led education leaders to utilize SWPBIS as a means of improving both student social and academic performance (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

In a 3-year study conducted in six Pacific Northwest and six Midwest high schools, Flannery et al. (2014) found a consistent decrease in problem behaviors in schools that implemented SWPBIS, whereas problem behaviors consistently increased in the comparison schools that did not incorporate SWPBIS. Researchers also found correlations between the use of SWPBIS in high schools and reductions in ODRs (Bohanon et al., 2012; Bohanon & Wu, 2014). Additionally, Bradshaw, Pas, et al. (2015)

found significant decreases in bullying and peer victimization incidents even in schools that had high rates of victimization incidents prior to SWPBIS implementation. The use of SWPBIS elements also was shown to decrease excessive tardiness in high school students (Tyre et al., 2011). However, the OSS rates in the four high schools in Vincent and Tobin's (2011) study rose slightly, despite significant correlation between SWPBIS implementation in nonclassroom settings and OSS reductions. A summary of related research is presented in Table A2 in Appendix A.

Little research is available on the academic effects of SWPBIS in high schools; however, two studies showed correlations between academic related variables and the use of SWPBIS in high schools (Freeman et al., 2015; Gietz & McIntosh, 2014). The studies are summarized in Table 3. First, in a study of 883 high schools from 37 states, Freeman et al. (2015) researched the effects of SWPBIS on high school dropout rates. The researchers did not find a direct link between SWPBIS and improved dropout rates; however, noticeable improvements in attendance were recognized (Freeman et al., 2015). As previously stated, poor school attendance was directly linked to the likelihood of students dropping out of school (Rumberger, 2011). Furthermore, despite the lack of direct association between SWPBIS and dropout rates, Freeman et al. discovered a minor statistically significant decrease in dropout rates for schools that implemented SWPBIS for extended periods of time with fidelity. The researchers also noted that the high schools with the highest minority enrollments had the lowest baseline scores but showed more academic and attendance growth over time (Freeman et al., 2015).

In a separate study, Gietz and McIntosh (2014) found a statistically significant percentage of students whose academic achievement was positively affected by a positive

view of the students' school environment. Gietz and McIntosh's findings were important to SWPBIS implementation because, as previously noted, one of the goals of PBIS implementers was to achieve positive changes in school climate (Bradshaw, Pas, et al, 2012; Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Carroll et al., 2012). Relevant studies are summarized in Table 3

Table 3
Studies of School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) and Improvements in High School Academics

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Freeman, J., Simonsen, B., McCoach, D. B., Sugai, G., Lombardi, A., & Horner, R. (2015). Relationship between school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports and academic, attendance, and behavior outcomes in high schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, *98*, 290–315.	To determine the relationship between SWPBIS and high school dropout rates	883 high schools from 37 states	Quantitative: relationship among SWPBIS fidelity, risk factors, attendance, academic performance, and dropout rates	No noticeable improvements in dropout rates but improvements in attendance
Gietz, C., & McIntosh, K. (2014). Relations between student perceptions of their school environment and academic achievement. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, *29*, 161–176.	Explore link between student views of climate and academics	Students in 969 elementary and middle schools	Quantitative: student perceptions of school environment; analysis of math and reading achievement	Academic success statistically significant; affected by student views climate
Swain-Bradway, J., Pinkney, C., & Flannery, K. B. (2015). Implementing schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports in high schools: Contextual factors and stages of implementation. Teaching Exceptional Children, 47, 245–256.	Examine the stages, challenges, and strategies of high school SWPBIS	8 high schools in Midwest and Pacific Northwest	Qualitative case study	Staff input necessary; using other schools as examples; support critical system needs first

SWPBIS Implementation Barriers

Despite the positive outcomes correlated with SWPBIS implementation, school personnel at all levels had to overcome barriers to the implementation process (Bohanon & Wu, 2014; Coffey & Horner, 2012; Lohrmann et al., 2013). The majority of these barriers were a result of lack of training, poor staff morale, or lack of administrative support (Lohrmann et al., 2013). Aside from the barriers at all school levels due to SWPBIS implementation, additional impediments materialized in high school settings (Flannery et al., 2014; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). One possible reason for the lack of research on high school SWPBIS was that most high schools contained specific variables that made SWPBIS implementation more challenging than elementary and middle school implementation (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; McIntosh et al., 2015; Molloy et al., 2013). First, high school structural barriers affected SWPBIS implementation (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013). For example, the large number of individuals within high schools made staff member communication, the development of routines, the organization of meeting times, and consistent discipline practices difficult (Bohanon et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013). Additionally, the size of most high schools required school personnel to use more effort and coordination in the collection of data and universal practice implementation because teachers were often structured in departments and schools, with numerous administrators responsible for different areas related to SWPBIS facilitation, like finances, discipline, and curriculum (Flannery et al., 2013; Molloy et al., 2013). High school staff members also generally had specific areas of responsibility and were not always able or willing to discuss school-related issues with other staff members, which prevented individuals in

different departments from participating in cross-content collaboration (Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

Another problem area that high school staffs encountered in SWPBIS implementation was the age and maturity of students (Bohanon et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; McDaniel, Kim, & Guyotte, 2017; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Teenagers were more independent, valued decision-making, and prioritized communication with friends over academics (Flannery et al., 2013). As a result, the SWPBIS teams had to consider the age and developmental levels of students when the teams designed acknowledgement systems and behavior lessons (Flannery et al., 2014). For instance, some teams used video lessons that included student actors, as opposed to the traditional teacher-led lessons (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013). Even though this approach took more initial time, staff time was reduced overall because of student involvement in the process (Flannery et al., 2013).

Another impediment to high school SWPBIS implementation was the establishment of age-appropriate acknowledgements and rewards for positive behaviors (Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Tangible forms of acknowledgements such as prom tickets and iPads were much more applicable to high school students than announcing student names over the intercom, which was a preferred reward in elementary and middle schools (Flannery et al., 2014). However, many schools had dwindling financial resources, which led school PBIS teams to discover free, age-appropriate acknowledgements and rewards, such as passes to the front of the lunch line and celebration days for students who achieve certain levels of behavioral success (Flannery et al., 2014; McDaniel et al., 2017; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

Implementer acceptance and commitment to the practice were essential contributors to SWPBIS sustainability (Coffey & Horner, 2012). Therefore, another substantial challenge in implementing SWPBIS in high schools was the practice of changing the perception of how staff members viewed their roles because staff members often formed inaccurate views of schools' overall climates because of department affiliation or location on campus (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). High school SWPBIS implementers also faced the abolition of staff preconceived notions of responsibilities (Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). One predetermined staff assumption was the perception that all students already possessed appropriate behavior and self-management skills upon high school enrollment, which in turn led to less emphasis on the explicit teaching of appropriate behaviors (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013). The concept of content-focused departmentalization was an impediment for school leaders to convince teachers that teaching expected behaviors was important (Bohanon et al., 2012). Bohanon et al. (2012) and Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) found that the use of data and examples with staff members prior to the introduction of change initiatives correlated with more positive change outcomes. However, these researchers also suggested that the use of examples be employed with caution because high school personnel generally had two perceptions about examples: if the interventions were not used in a high school or used in a high school similar to their own, staff members did not deem the interventions relevant (Bohanon et al., 2012; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

Overall, Bradshaw, Pas, et al. (2015) found that the SWPBIS implementation in high schools was slower than previously studied elementary and middle schools, especially with the advanced tiers, which highlighted the need for school officials to set

realistic goals in regards to implementation timelines. However, the researchers also discovered that high rates of baseline school disorder did not correlate with the fidelity of implementation and did not emerge as impediments to implementation as was previously conceived (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015). Flannery et al. (2013) discovered that the high school SWPBIS implementation process necessitated 2 years to achieve significant advancement, even though purposeful alterations occurred in the teaching of behavioral expectations and reward or recognition systems. High school leaders who implemented SWPBIS with fidelity formed systems that strengthened communication and consensus to help change staff perceptions (Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Without such systems, staff perceptions did not change or revert to the previously established practices (Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Additionally, high school staffs needed increased amounts of professional learning relative to SWPBIS and more focus on preparedness in readiness and leadership distribution to gain majority stakeholder buy-in to ensure high levels of positive student outcomes (Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

Table 4
Relative Studies on Teacher and Administrator Perceptions of PBIS

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Flannery, K. B., Fenning, P., Kato, M. M., & McIntosh, K. (2014). Effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports and fidelity of implementation on problem behavior in high schools. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 29, 111–124.	Examine the effects of SWPBIS fidelity on problem behavior problem behavior.	12 high schools; 6 in Pacific Northwest and 6 in Midwest	Quantitatively determine changes in ODRs and SET scores over a 3 year period	Schools that implemented SWPBIS with fidelity experience decreases in ODRS; the higher the SET scores, the lower the ODR rate

Flannery, K. B., Frank, J. L., Kato, M. M., Doren, B., & Fenning, P. (2013). Implementing schoolwide positive behavior support in high school settings: Analysis of eight high schools. *High School Journal*, 96, 267–282.	Examine the changes in high school SWPBIS fidelity over the course of the study.	8 diverse high schools in Midwest and Pacific Northwest	Paired t-tests were used to determine the change in SET implementation sub-scales from beginning to end of year 1 and beginning to end of year 2.	Complex high school structures make implementation slower, and communication and consensus are necessary
Lohrmann, S., Martin, S. D., & Patil, S. (2013). External and internal coaches' perspectives about overcoming barriers to universal interventions. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions,* 15, 26–38.	To examine issues with teacher and adminis-trator buy-in of SWPBIS and investigate how they were resolved.	18 PBIS coaches; including 8 internal and 8 External	Qualitative: semi-structured interviews; open coding	Barriers included negative staff perceptions, insufficient understanding of SWPBIS, and low staff morale. Strategies for resolving included better communication staff involvement in planning, and increased administrative involvement.
Swain-Bradway, J., Pinkney, C., & Flannery, K. B. (2015). Implementing schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports in high schools: Contextual factors and stages of implementation. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 47, 245–256.	Examine the stages, problems, and strategies of high school SWPBIS implement ation	8 high schools in Midwest and Pacific Northwest	Qualitative case study	Staff participation is necessary; using other schools as examples is helpful; support critical system needs first

Opposition to SWPBIS

Both educators and parents expressed opposition to the use of PBIS in schools (Lane et al., 2009; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). Detractors expressed concerns that the use of PBIS caused negative school climates and encouraged student compliance without student understanding (Bruhn et al., 2014). Another complaint was that teaching remedial behavioral expectations was demeaning and disrespectful to those students who already understood the expectations (Bruhn et al., 2014).

Furthermore, much of the opposition to PBIS was directed towards the use of tangible items to reinforce positive student behaviors (Bruhn et al., 2014; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). Even some social psychologists disagreed with the premise of using rewards in behavior modification techniques on the premise that this type of reinforcement led to reduced intrinsic motivation, self-determination, and creativity (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999, 2001; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Kohn, 1993; Lepper, Greene, & Nisbett, 1973; Pierce & Cheney, 2013). The findings of these researchers were in direct conflict with other researchers' findings that rewarding appropriate behaviors caused no harmful effects or only caused negative effects under certain conditions (Cameron, Banko, & Pierce, 2001; Cameron & Pierce, 1994). For example, Cameron et al. (2001) found that tangible rewards increased activity performance for initially low-interest endeavors, and intrinsic motivation decreased slightly when used in conjunction with activities that were already of high interest. Ultimately, many of the researchers who opposed the use of tangible reinforcement used bad program examples to generalize all tangible reward use as negative (Akin-Little et al., 2004).

Negative Results of SWPBIS

To further support the claims of those who oppose PBIS, several researchers indicated poor or adverse effects of PBIS use. Even though Bradshaw, Waaldorp, et al. (2015); Guillory (2015); and Vincent and Tobin (2011) indicated that SWPBIS led to positive student outcomes, these researchers also found negative or nonsignificant changes in outcomes in relation to SWPBIS. First, Bradshaw, Waaldorp, et al. (2015) did not find a significant effect on the number of suspensions between the SWPBIS schools and the comparison schools. Likewise, the OSS rates in both the elementary and middle schools in the Vincent and Tobin study experienced very little change, as did the distribution of exclusionary discipline rates among ethnic-minority students. Similarly, OSS rates increased in the Guillory study by 111.7% in Year 3, but this increase was attributed to the study school's reduction in behavioral funding, which led to the closure of the ISS room.

Academically, in a study that compared the academic achievement of Connecticut elementary, middle, and high schools that implemented SWPBIS to Connecticut schools that did not implement SWPBIS, Gage, Sugai, and Lewis (2013) found that only sixth-grade math achievement was significantly higher for SWPBIS schools than non-SWPBIS schools. Additionally, 15 non-SWPBIS schools had higher academic achievement than SWPBIS schools (Gage et al., 2013). Similarly, Simonsen et al. (2012) discovered that Illinois students showed improvements in standardized reading scores regardless of schools' levels of SWPBIS implementation fidelity. A summary of the related literature is found in Appendix B.

Summary

Historically, student behavior was an important aspect of the education system; however, beginning in the 1930s into the 2000s, student behavior became increasingly disruptive as did the methods school personnel used to address these behaviors. Unfortunately, despite the use of harsh punitive consequences, student behaviors continued to escalate. As a result, educators sought other means of addressing behavior management. PBIS was one method educators discovered that improved behavioral outcomes. Developed by behavioral psychologists and having many characteristics of operant conditioning, PBIS was a framework for school officials to build proactive systems that encouraged appropriate student behaviors. PBIS was comprised of three tiers, but most schools only utilized the first tier, or SWPBIS. SWPBIS was shown to have many positive effects on both behavioral and academic outcomes in elementary and middle schools; however, limited research studies were conducted in high schools. This study was designed to help fill that gap in the research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

As discipline problems grow in number and intensity, school administrators seek more proactive approaches to managing student behavior. Researchers have found SWPBIS to be an effective means for reducing student ODRs (Bradshaw, Waaldorp, et al., 2015; Guillory, 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014). However, the majority of research on the effectiveness of SWPBIS has been done in elementary and middle schools, leaving a gap in the literature on SWPBIS in high school settings.

In this explanatory, sequential, mixed methods research study, the researcher focused on teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia high school. In the quantitative portion of the study, the researcher analyzed teacher and administrator perceptions through the use of survey questions. Additionally, even though the quantitative data provided useful general information, it did not include explanations about the perceptions of SWPBIS development from individuals within the high school (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, the researcher also included a qualitative element, where the researcher investigated high school teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS through the use of qualitative interviews.

Research Questions

Through the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher answered one overarching research question: What are high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Three specific research subquestions guided the study:

1. What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS?

2. What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?

3. To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?

Research Design

There are both strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2014). For example, quantitative methods are used to describe conditions, examine relationships, and investigate cause-and-effect connections through numerical data but do not include personal interactions with study participants (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Conversely, qualitative methods are used for deep investigations into research settings to determine why circumstances occur and how participants perceive the circumstances; however, this approach allows for a limited research scope and contains built-in research bias (Gay & Airasian, 2000; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As a result, an explanatory, sequential, mixed methods approach with descriptive quantitative methods and a case study analysis for the qualitative portion were used to examine high school teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS in one high school in Middle Georgia. The combined use of quantitative and qualitative methods presented a more in-depth understanding of the research problem in a way that the sole use of quantitative or qualitative methods could not (Creswell, 2014). This explanatory, sequential design involved the collection and examination of quantitative data in the initial phase, followed by the collection and examination of qualitative data in the second phase (Creswell, 2014).

The quantitative portion of the study incorporated a descriptive research design surveying teachers and administrators on their perceptions of SWPBIS. After the

completion of the surveys, the collected data were analyzed. These quantitative findings were used to provide a baseline of understanding for the study, which was expanded upon in the qualitative phase of the study.

The qualitative component was a bounded case study which occurred following the collection and analysis of the quantitative data. A bounded case study was an investigation of a single setting, subject, or event constrained by limitations (Bogdan & Biglan, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). One of the boundaries of the current study was that it was conducted in a high school setting. Additionally, the study was bounded by the participation of the study school in the implementation of SWPBIS.

Teachers and administrators from the study school volunteered to participate in one-on-one interviews about their perceptions of SWPBIS. Interviews were utilized because of the propensity to provide information the researcher could not directly observe (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). Semi-structured interview questions allowed the researcher the flexibility to ask additional questions based on participant responses (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Population

The population for this study included both students and staff from one high school (Grades 9–12) in a Middle Georgia school district in the beginning phases of SWPBIS implementation. The school had a total student population of 1,575. Ethnic composition of the student body was 31% European American, 51.8% African American, 9.1% Hispanic, 6.5% multiracial, and 1.6% Asian/Pacific Islander or Native American. Further, 62.3% of the student population was economically disadvantaged. Additionally, the school's certified staff included one principal, four assistant principals, three

counselors, and 98 classroom teachers. The administrative staff was comprised of three men and two women; four were European American and one was African American. Two counselors were female and one was male; two were African American and one was European American. There were 63 female and 35 male teachers; 80 teachers were European American, 17 were African American, and one was multiracial.

Sample

The quantitative sample for this study was obtained from the certified staff members at the study school who voluntarily completed the PBIS Perception Survey. The qualitative portion of the study was comprised of two samples. The first included all of the administrators at the school who volunteered to participate in one-one-one interviews about their perceptions of effectiveness of SWPBIS. The second sample contained the teachers who volunteered to participate in one-one-one interviews about their perceptions of effectiveness of SWPBIS. These teachers were chosen through intensity sampling, defined as the selection of participants for the purpose of obtaining a sample that contains differing characteristics (Gay & Airasian, 2000). The selection of these participants was based on years of experience, subjects taught, gender, and race. The researcher's goal was to obtain a sample that was characteristic of the total teacher population at the study site.

Instrumentation

The quantitative instrument used in the study was the web-based PBIS Perception Survey (see Appendix C). This questionnaire was developed by the researcher and validated by an expert panel of education professors at Columbus State University. The inquiry was composed of seven Likert-type survey questions used to gauge teacher and

administrator perceptions of SWPBIS in the study school. Teachers and administrators were asked to rank their perceptions on each question by choosing the answer best representing their views.

The qualitative instrumentation consisted of one-one-one interviews with three administrators and seven teachers from the study school. The interviews were conducted by two outside nonbiased researchers from Columbus State University. The use of interviews assisted the researcher in identifying the "hows" and "whys" of the key elements of the participants' experiences (Yin, 2018).

Methodological Assumptions

Assumptions are the concepts the researcher holds to be true about the study (Williams & Colomb, 2003). The assumptions for this study were the following:

1. It was assumed that the staff members who participated in the quantitative survey understood the questions.
2. It was assumed that the staff members who participated in the quantitative survey answered the questions in an honest and truthful manner.
3. It was assumed that the teachers and administrators who participated in the one-on-one interviews understood the questions.
4. It was assumed that the teachers and administrators who participated in the one-on-one interviews answered the questions in an honest and truthful manner.

Methodological Limitations

Limitations are features of research studies of which researchers have no control or recognize as potentially causing negative effects to the findings or the generalizability

of the findings (Gay & Airasian, 2000). One limitation to this study was that it was a single case study. Yin (2018) contended that the results of single case studies should not be used to generalize to larger populations. However, the results could be used to magnify and generalize theories (Yin, 2018). Finally, due to the researcher's role as PBIS district coordinator for the school system in which the study took place, another potential limitation was researcher bias in the data analysis.

Negotiating Access

The researcher requested permission to conduct the research study at a high school in a Middle Georgia school district. The school district encouraged research studies that were beneficial to the students of the district. Per the district's guidelines for requesting permission to conduct the research, the researcher was required to submit written permission from the researcher's supervisor as well as the principal of the study school; research proposal; letter stating that the school system, employees, or students would not be identified in any draft or final results; and an agreement to submit the final results to the district's central office. Additionally, this process was required prior to Columbus State University's Institutional Review Board application.

Researcher's Role

At the time of the study, the researcher served as the PBIS district coordinator in the school system in which the study occurred. In this position, the researcher worked with the school's administration and PBIS team in formulating the school's PBIS framework. However, the researcher did not work in the study school on a regular basis. Furthermore, the researcher had amicable but not close relationships with some members of the school staff.

Prior to the researcher's job as PBIS district coordinator, the researcher served as a high school English teacher and high school assistant principal. The experiences with PBIS, the structure of high school settings, and the mindsets and perspectives of high school students and staff members were an important aspect of the qualitative phase of the study. As explained by Creswell (2014), experiences and insights are vital to the creation of the understanding of the phenomenon. However, these experiences also created the possibility for researcher bias.

Researcher as Instrument

Participant interviews are intended to allow researchers to enter other people's perspectives (Patton, 2015). Therefore, in the course of naturalistic inquiry, the researcher is the instrument used to collect participant data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, human investigators have the propensity to possess both descriptive and tacit knowledge as well as the abilities to adapt, perceive prominent factors, and investigate these factors during the course of active engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order for these skills to be utilized, the researcher must engage the participants through interview questioning (DeMarris, 2004; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Finally, as the instrument, the researcher is responsible for following the study's line of inquiry and verbalizing the questions without bias (Yin, 2018).

Trustworthiness

The validity of qualitative research centers on the accuracy of the findings from the perspective of researchers, participants, and readers (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Therefore, trustworthiness is an important aspect of qualitative research. Trustworthiness includes the criteria of internal and external validity, objectivity, and reliability (Lincoln

& Guba, 1985). In order to confirm trustworthiness, Creswell et al. (2007) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested the use of precautionary measures. Therefore, the researcher utilized the following safeguards to ensure trustworthiness of the study: clarification of researcher bias, presentation of negative discrepant findings, utilization of outside researchers to conduct interviews, and member checking (Creswell et al., 2007).

Credibility

Credibility is a term applied to qualitative research to signify the accuracy of a topic's identification and description (Gay & Airasian, 2000; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested credibility is crucial to a study's trustworthiness and identified methods for ensuring a study's believability: lengthy engagement and enduring observation, triangulation, negative case analysis, peer debriefing, member checks, and reflexivity. To ensure credibility for this study, the researcher used member checking. After the researcher coded the data obtained in the interviews, feedback was solicited from each participant on the findings to confirm the accuracy of the results. Member checking was the most important method for eliminating the misinterpretation of participant feedback, ensuring the correct participant perspectives, and identifying researcher bias (Maxwell, 2013).

Transferability

Transferability is the concept of applying a study to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The transferability of this study to future studies will be determined by future researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, the researcher provided sufficient descriptive data for future researchers to make this determination (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Even though this study was a single case study and could not be generalized, this

study might make the judgement of transferability by potential appliers possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Dependability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), dependability is the capability to determine a research study's findings can be repeated. The researcher established dependability through the use of an inquiry audit, which involved accounting for the fairness and accuracy of the data, conducted by an objective researcher. Additionally, an audit trail was formed through detailed and accurate note taking, which also included traceable procedures and documents that represented the research process.

Confirmability

The study's level of neutrality is demonstrated through confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To ensure confirmability, the researcher's investigative focus was on the data as opposed to the objectivity of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, the researcher provided a detailed explanation of the steps involved in the research process, and the researcher's role was declared to highlight the researcher's perspective and potential bias. The semi-structured format of the questions also negated the possibility of reflexivity (Yin, 2018). Furthermore, a confirmability audit was conducted by an objective researcher to affirm that the researcher's findings were supported by data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ethical Considerations

Whenever research is conducted involving human participants, specific ethical considerations arise (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Yin, 2018). Based on the 1979 Belmont Report (as cited in Vollmer & George, 2010), researchers must consider ethical concerns

when conducting research. The two subjects that traditionally dictate research ethics are informed consent and informant protection from harm (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). To gain informed consent, every teacher and administrator in the study school had the opportunity to volunteer for participation in a survey about their perceptions of SWPBIS. The first page of the survey included the informed consent. The participants selected the appropriate response within the web-based survey as to whether they agreed or disagreed to participate in the study. If participants disagreed, the survey ended. The responses were recorded. If participants agreed, then the survey advanced to the next item.

To gain informed consent for the qualitative phase of the study, every teacher and administrator had the opportunity to volunteer for participation in one-on-one interviews by signing an Informed Consent Form that included the researcher's contact information, elements of the study, the rights of the participants, guarantee of participant anonymity and confidentiality, and the participants' predicted time commitment. To protect the accuracy of the information the participants imparted, no gifts, tokens, or rewards were distributed to the participants for their participation in the study.

In order to protect participants from harm, the participants' privacy and confidentiality must be ensured (Yin, 2018). As a result, several steps were taken to protect the participants' privacy and confidentiality. First, both the study site and participants were given pseudonyms to protect true identities (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). Additionally, at no time were the participants' true identities revealed in written or verbal reporting (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). Lastly, after the analysis of data, the data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for 5 years, after which the physical data will be shredded

and the electronic data will be destroyed through secure erase (American Psychological Association, 2010).

Data Collection

The study school began the process of SWPBIS implementation in July 2017 school year. During preplanning, the Regional Education Service Agency school climate specialists gave the school's faculty an overview of the elements of SWPBIS. Additionally, the school's principal assigned faculty members to the school's PBIS team who were responsible for creating the school's PBIS framework and implementation plan. The team consisted of the principal, assistant principal for instruction, two special education teachers, three math teachers, an English teacher, and the intervention specialist. Two of the team members were assigned the role of PBIS coaches by the principal. The coaches were accountable for managing team meetings as well as the school's PBIS implementation efforts. Other team roles included team leader, recorder, data specialist, time keeper, and behavior specialist.

In late August 2017, the PBIS coaches received a 4-hour training provided by the Regional Education Service Agency school climate specialists. Additionally, the PBIS team participated in three one-day trainings in September, October, and November led by members of the Georgia Department of Education's PBIS team. Prior to the September training, the team was required to complete the 2016-2017 school data profile that included the school's student demographic data, attendance rate, College and Career Readiness Performance Index score, school climate score, school discipline data, and suspension trend data. Before the October training, the team was required to complete

their behavior matrix. Finally, in preparation for the November training, the team completed the school's PBIS action pan and discipline flow chart.

Another aspect of the school training phase was the expectation that all staff members complete the Self-Assessment Survey (Sugai, Horner, & Todd, 2003). The PBIS team used the Self-Assessment Survey results during the November training as data for implementation planning purposes. Beginning in December, the PBIS team met at least once per month to discuss the progress of the implementation and discuss the school's behavior data. The school's staff began implementing elements of SWPBIS at the beginning of January 2018, which also coincided with the commencement of the spring semester of the 2017-2018 school year.

The quantitative data collected were the results of the web-based PBIS Perception Survey. The researcher e-mailed the study school's principal a document that contained a formal request asking teachers and administrators to volunteer for participation in the PBIS Perception Survey as well as an electronic link to the survey questions. The principal forwarded the e-mail to the school's teachers and administrators via their school email addresses. The first page of the survey contained the informed consent. Participants were asked to agree or disagree to participate in the study. If the participants disagreed, the survey ended, and the responses were documented. If the participants agreed, the survey progressed to the next question, and the participants were allowed to complete the survey.

In the qualitative portion of this study, teachers and administrators were asked to volunteer for participation in one-on-one interviews about their perceptions of SWPBIS. Potential participants were identified through the last question of the PBIS Perception

Survey, which asked respondents to indicate their willingness to participate in one-on-one interviews. Based on participant response, the researcher contacted the teachers and administrators who expressed a willingness to participate in the interviews. The researcher met with each potential participant who completed the interview Informed Consent Form. Once the researcher obtained all of the Informed Consent Forms, the researcher chose interview participants through intensity sampling to obtain a sample that was consistent with the teaching staff's demographics (Yin, 2018).

The one-on-one interviews were conducted on the school campus after school hours by two education professors from Columbus State University. Seven teachers and three administrators were interviewed. Before beginning each interview, the participants were reminded of their right to end the interview at any time without repercussions. During the interviews, the facilitators asked the participants seven semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix D).

During the course of data collection, the focus of the research was progressively narrowed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). The participants were allowed to discuss their experiences freely until saturation was achieved (Creswell, 2014). The facilitators recorded participant responses with an Olympus VN-541PC digital voice recorder and through written field notes recording participant comments and the facilitators' observations and reflections (Gay & Airasian, 2000). After the completion of the interviews, the researcher transcribed the responses and had each interviewee member check the responses for accuracy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Participant responses served as the data for this portion of the study.

Response Rate

A total of 103 certified staff members were e-mailed participation requests for the PBIS Perception Survey (Appendix C). The researcher's goal was to obtain a response rate of 80% of the staff members completing the Self-Assessment Survey. Additionally, 98 teachers and 5 administrators were given Informed Consent Forms requesting participation in the one-one-one interviews about high school teacher and administrator perspectives of SWPBIS. The researcher's goal was to obtain a response rate of 50% of the teachers volunteering for participation in these collection methods.

Data Analysis

In a research study, the analysis of the data is connected to the nature of the focus of the study and the collected data (Gay & Airasian, 2000). Data analysis is as vital as any other part of the research process because, irrespective of how effectively the study was conducted, improper analysis often leads to incorrect research conclusions (Gay & Airasian, 2000). In this study, the researcher utilized an explanatory, sequential, mixed methods research design. As part of this approach, the quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately, which was suggested for student research because the qualitative data built on the quantitative data (Creswell, 2014).

Data sources. The data sources for the three research subquestions were the PBIS Perception Survey and one-on-one interviews. Table 4 shows specific items.

Method of analysis. After the survey data were collected, the answers to each question were averaged to determine the mean. Additionally, teacher and administrator perceptions were analyzed through constant comparison. The researcher identified topics and ideas to establish distinctive characteristics and then placed them in appropriate

themes (Gay & Airasian, 2000; Goetz & LeCompte, 1981). As each new concept was identified, it was evaluated against existing themes to determine if it was similar or different (Gay & Airasian, 2000; Goetz & LeCompte, 1981). Themes were then modified or added to develop general patterns (Gay & Airasian, 2000; Goetz & LeCompte, 1981).

Table 5
Qualitative and Quantitative Data Item Analysis

Item	Research	Qualitative: Interview Questions	Quantitative: Survey Items
Knowledge	Bohanon, H., & Wu, M. J. (2014)	1. Please explain what you know about PBIS.	2. What is your knowledge level of PBIS?
Benefits	Bohanon, H., Fenning, P., Hicks, K., Weber, S., Thier, K., Akins, B., . . . McArdle, L. (2012); Flannery, K. B., Fenning, P., Kato, M. M., & McIntosh, K. (2014).	2. Please explain the importance of PBIS in regards to your school climate. 5. Please describe how you see PBIS benefiting your school.	3. How would you rate the importance of PBIS in relation to improving your school climate? 6. How would you rate your perception of the potential benefits of PBIS?
Implementation	Bohanon, H., Fenning, P., Hicks, K., Weber, S., Thier, K., Akins, B., . . . McArdle, L. (2012); Bohanon, H., & Wu, M.-J. (2014)	4. What was the purpose for implementing PBIS in your school? 6. What do you see as factors that positively affect PBIS? 7. What recommendations would you make for improving implementation?	5. I understand the reasons for PBIS implementation. 7. There are more elements that promote the success of PBIS than obstacles that hinder its progress.
Barriers	Bohanon, H., & Wu, M. J. (2014).	3. What barriers do you see hindering the success of PBIS in your school?	4. There are more barriers that prevent the success of PBIS than components that promote its success.

Reporting the Data

The results of this mixed methods research study are reported in Chapter 4. The chapter contains information about the findings related to the statistical test conducted in reference to the quantitative phase of the study as well as the results from the interviews, which include coded patterns and common themes. The results of the statistical test are reported using tables, and the interview results are reported in text and tables.

Summary

In this study, the researcher employed an explanatory, sequential, mixed methods research design to examine teacher and administrator perspectives of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia high school. Within this chapter, the researcher described the research design, population, sample, the data collection instruments, and the procedures that were followed for conducting the research. Furthermore, the researcher identified how trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were established as well as the practices used to protect human subjects.

CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

Maintaining student discipline within United States public schools was an essential responsibility for public school officials because the maintenance of the physical safety of staff and students as well as well-managed classrooms supported student learning (Eckes & Russo, 2012; Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002). However, there was not a consensus among educators as to which discipline methods were appropriate (Casella, 2006; Schiro, 1985; Stouffer, 1952; Toby, 1998). Traditionally, school officials used punitive consequences to punish students who displayed unacceptable behaviors; however, the use of some of these punitive consequences were found to have adverse effects (Allman & Slate, 2011; Eckes & Russo, 2012; Fabelo et al., 2011; Flannery et al., 2012; Simson, 2014; Skiba, et al., 2014).

Conversely, PBIS was a framework designed to build positive school climates through the alignment of well-defined behavior expectations, incentives for appropriate behaviors, the encouragement of positive relationships, and data-based decision making (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2002). PBIS was comprised of three tiers of increasing levels of intervention strength; however, the majority of the schools that implemented PBIS only utilized the first tier, which was also known as SWPBIS and encompassed whole schools (Kincaid et al., 2015; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

Even though SWPBIS was found to be successful in elementary and middle school settings, a limited amount of high schools implemented the framework (Horner,

2013). The scarcity of high school implementation included barriers specific to high schools such as increased student and staff populations, the departmentalization of teachers, and the acceptance and commitment to implementation by staff members (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; McIntosh et al., 2015; Molloy et al., 2013). The absence of SWPBIS implementation in high school settings also created a gap in the literature.

The researcher proposed to examine administrator and teacher perceptions of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia suburban high school. The quantitative data for this explanatory sequential mixed methods study was obtained through the usage of the PBIS Perception survey. Additionally, interviews were conducted with administrators and teachers about their perceptions of SWPBIS. Prior to collecting any data, permission was obtained from the school's principal, the school system where the study was conducted, and the Columbus State University IRB.

This study was conducted in one high school in a Middle Georgia school district that was in the first year of SWPBIS implementation. The initial collection of data was obtained through the PBIS Perception survey which was emailed to the school's principal who then forwarded it to the school's certified staff members. The data from this survey were analyzed quantitatively. The survey was comprised of seven Likert-type survey questions used to measure administrator and teacher perceptions of SWPBIS in the study school.

The second data collection segment involved one-on-one semi-structured interviews with two administrators and eight teachers in the study school. Each participant was asked seven semi-structured questions about their knowledge, perceptions

of the benefits, implementation, and barriers of SWPBIS in their school. All interviews were electronically recorded and transcribed and were analyzed through the constant comparison method.

Research Questions

The research findings were correlated to the following research question: What are high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Additionally, findings were associated with three research subquestions:

1. What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS?
2. What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?
3. To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?

Research Design

The researcher used an explanatory, sequential mixed methods design with descriptive quantitative methods and a qualitative case study analysis to examine the perceptions of high school administrators and teachers about SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia High School. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods produced a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem in a manner that the exclusive use of quantitative or qualitative methods could not (Creswell, 2014). This design included the collection and analysis of quantitative data in the preliminary segment which was subsequently followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data in the second segment (Creswell, 2014).

Before collecting data, the researcher first sought approval from the local board of education where the study was conducted. Additionally, the researcher obtained the

approval of the principal of the study school. After both local board of education and principal permission were obtained, the researcher sought and obtained permission from the Columbus State University IRB to conduct the research study.

In the quantitative phase of the study, the researcher used surveys to assess teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS. First, the researcher emailed the principal of the study school two documents: a request for teachers to participate in the PBIS Perception Survey and a request for administrators to participate in the PBIS Perception Survey. Both documents contained electronic links to the surveys. The principal then forwarded the appropriate requests to the school's teachers and administrators. As the surveys were completed, the responses were collected in and stored in a web-based data base. After the survey data was collected, the responses were averaged to determine the mean. The findings from this quantitative phase were used to establish a baseline of understanding for the study, which were developed further in the qualitative segment of the study.

After the collection and analysis of the quantitative data, the qualitative case study was conducted. The data for this phase were collected through one-on-one interviews with teachers and administrators. The utilization of interviews allowed the researcher to obtain data that could not be directly observed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2016). To begin this phase, the researcher sent the study school's principal two separate emails each containing two documents. One email contained a request for teachers to participate in one-on-one interviews about their perceptions of SWPBIS and an informed consent form for them to complete if they wished to participate in the study. The other email contained a request for administrators to participate in one-on-one interviews about their

perceptions of SWPBIS and an informed consent form for them to complete if they wished to participate in the study. The principal forwarded both emails to the appropriate personnel.

Two professors from Columbus State University conducted the semi-structured interviews. The informed consent forms from each participant were collected prior to the beginning of the interviews. Each participant was asked the seven semi-structured questions about their perceptions of SWPBIS. Each interview was digitally recorded then transcribed using a web-based transcription service. After the interviews were transcribed, the researcher utilized the member checking method to allow each participant to inspect their responses for accuracy. After each participant confirmed the validity of their transcription, the researcher used the constant comparison method to analyze the data.

Respondents

A total of 27 teachers and 4 administrators responded to the PBIS perception survey. Sense this survey was anonymous and did not contain questions about demographic information, no demographic data was collected in this portion of the study.

Both teachers and administrators were emailed requests to participate in one-on-one interviews about their perceptions of SWPBIS. A total of 8 teachers and 2 administrators responded in affirmation to the requests, and all were interviewed. The teacher respondents included 3 males and 5 females, of whom 7 were Caucasian and one was African-American. The teachers ranged in years of experience from 7-25 years. Additionally, the administrative respondents consisted of 2 male Caucasians whose years of experience ranged from 20-21 years. Specific respondent data are presented in Table 6.

Table 6
Interview Respondent Demographic Data

Participant Pseudonyms	Occupation	Gender	Race	Experience
Susan	Teacher	Female	Caucasian	15 Years
Ellen	Teacher	Female	African-American	11 Years
Steven	Teacher	Male	Caucasian	18 Years
James	Teacher	Male	Caucasian	25 Years
Patrick	Teacher	Male	Caucasian	7 Years
Laura	Teacher	Female	Caucasian	20 Years
Julia	Teacher	Female	Caucasian	10 Years
Monica	Teacher	Female	Caucasian	13 Years
Robert	Administrator	Male	Caucasian	20 Years
Greg	Administrator	Male	Caucasian	21 Years

Participants' Profiles

Susan

At the time of the study, this Caucasian female teacher had worked in education for a total of 15 years, all of which were at the study school. She had a graduate degree and was a content area teacher. In narrating her perceptions about PBIS, Susan had not noticed any benefits of PBIS, but she believed that it would be beneficial if it was implemented with fidelity.

Ellen

At the time of the study, this African-American female teacher had worked in education for a total of 11 years, one of which was at the study school. She had multiple

graduate degrees and was a content area teacher. Additionally, she served as a member of the school's PBIS team. In narrating her perceptions about PBIS, Ellen firmly believed that the use of the PBIS framework could be used to achieve improved student outcomes. However, she recognized that there needed to be a paradigm shift in the school staff before the students would buy in to the program.

Steven

At the time of the study, this Caucasian male teacher had worked in education for a total of 18 years, three of which were at the study school. He had a graduate degree and was a content area teacher. Additionally, education was his second career. In narrating his perceptions about PBIS, Steven expressed his belief that PBIS could be beneficial for the school's climate, but he perceived that teacher buy-in was lacking.

James

At the time of the study, this Caucasian male teacher had worked in education for a total of 25 years, 13 of which were at the study school. He had a graduate degree and was a content area teacher. In narrating his perceptions about PBIS, James believed the utilization of PBIS could benefit the school by improving safety. However, he felt the lack of communication about PBIS within the school was hindering its success.

Patrick

At the time of the study, this Caucasian male teacher had worked in education for a total of 7 years, all of which were at the study school. He had a graduate degree and was a content area teacher. Additionally, education was his third career. In narrating his perceptions about PBIS, Patrick firmly supported the implementation of PBIS and

perceived that the framework was aligned to his beliefs about education and how he managed his classroom.

Laura

At the time of the study, this Caucasian female teacher had worked in education for a total of 20 years, 2 of which were at the study school. She had a graduate degree and was an elective teacher. Laura believed that PBIS could be successful in the study school. However, she felt that a lack of staff buy-in and communication were barriers that prevented its success.

Julia

At the time of the study, this Caucasian female teacher had worked in education for a total of 10 years, 7 of which were at the study school. She had a bachelor's degree and was an elective teacher. Julia believed that PBIS could be very beneficial to the study school because she had knowledge of its success in another high school.

Monica

At the time of the study, this Caucasian female teacher had worked in education for education for 13 years, 7 of which were at the study school. She had multiple graduate degrees and was a content area teacher. Additionally, Monica served on the school's PBIS team. Monica firmly believed that PBIS could be successful in the study school. However, she believed that an adult paradigm shift was necessary for PBIS to be implemented with fidelity.

Robert

At the time of the study, this Caucasian male administrator had worked in education for 20 years, 2 of which were at the study school. The study school was also

the only site he had served as an administrator. Additionally, he had multiple graduate degrees. Robert perceived that PBIS could be an effective means of creating climate change in the school, but he affirmed that all staff members needed to buy-in to the system to maximize its affect.

Greg

At the time of the study, this Caucasian male administrator had worked in education for 21 years, 11 of which were at the study school. The study school was also the only site he had served as an administrator. Additionally, he had multiple graduate degrees. Greg firmly believed that PBIS was both an effective system for creating both behavioral and climate changes in the school, and he stated that its utilization had already created positive changes in the climate.

Findings and Data Analysis

Through the literature review and research studies, the researcher indicated a gap in high school SWPBIS research. Therefore the purpose this research study was to add to the literature by examining high school teacher and administrator perceptions of SWPBIS. This explanatory, sequential mixed-methods study began with the data collection and analysis of statistical, quantitative survey results. The quantitative phase of the study was followed by the collection of qualitative data through one-on-one interviews with teachers and administrators. The interviews were digitally recorded then transcribed using a web-based transcription service and coded through the constant comparison method by the researcher.

Quantitative Findings

The researcher used the web-based PBIS Perception Survey as the quantitative instrument for this study (See Appendix C). The PBIS Perception Survey was a Likert-type survey consisting of seven questions that gauged teacher and administrator perceptions of PBIS. Both teachers and administrators were asked to rate their views on each question by choosing the answer that best represented their opinions.

A total of 95 classroom teachers were emailed requests to participate in the PBIS Perception Survey. Twenty-eight of the teachers who were emailed requests participated in the survey. All 27 teachers affirmed that they agreed to the terms of the Informed Consent (Question 1), and all 27 teachers answered each of the remaining six questions with the exception of question 5 which was skipped by one participant. The results of the teacher survey are below.

Question 2: What is your knowledge level of PBIS?. The majority of the respondents, 70.37%, indicated they had a "limited" knowledge of PBIS while 29.63% signified they were "proficiently" knowledgeable about PBIS. None of the respondents suggested they had neither "expert" nor "zero" knowledge about PBIS.

Question 3: How would you rate the importance of PBIS in relation to improving your school climate? Most of the respondents, 55.56%, indicated that PBIS was "helpful" in relation to improving school climate while 37.04% signified it had a "limited" affect. Only 3.70% of respondents revealed that PBIS was "exceptional" in improving school climate, and 3.70% responded that it was a "waste of time."

Question 4: There are more barriers that prevent the success of PBIS than components that promote its success. Most respondents, 59.26%, "somewhat agreed" that

there were more barriers to PBIS than components that promoted its success, and 33.33% "somewhat disagreed". Only 3.70% of respondents "completely disagreed" with this statement and 3.70% "completely agreed".

Question 5: I understand the reasons for PBIS implementation. The vast majority of respondents, 61.54%, reported that they "somewhat agreed" that they understood the reasons for PBIS implementation. The respondents who completely agreed consisted of 19.23% of the teachers while 15.38% "somewhat disagreed." Only 3.85% of the respondents "completely disagreed".

Question 6: How would you rate your perception of the potential benefits of PBIS? The perceptions of respondents was equal, 40.74%, for those who both believed PBIS had "limited" and "helpful" benefits. A smaller group, 14.84%, perceived the benefits of PBIS to be "exceptional." Only 3.70% of respondents indicated that PBIS was a "waste of time."

Question 7: There are more elements that promote the success of PBIS than obstacles that hinder its progress. The vast majority of respondents, 62.96%, revealed that they "somewhat agreed" there were more elements that promote the success of PBIS than hinder its progress while 29.63% "somewhat disagreed." Only 7.41% of the respondents "completely agreed" with this statement, and no respondents chose "completely disagreed." Specific respondent data are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Teacher Survey Findings

Question	Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4
Informed Consent	Yes- 100%	No- 0.0%		
What is your knowledge level of PBIS?	None- 0%	Limited- 73.08%	Proficient- 26.92%	Expert- 0%
How would you rate the importance of PBIS in relation to improving your school climate?	Waste of Time- 3.85%	Limited- 38.46%	Helpful- 53.85%	Exceptional- 3.85%
There are more barriers that prevent the success of PBIS than components that promote its success.	Completely Agree- 3.85%	Somewhat Agree- 57.69%	Somewhat Disagree- 34.62%	Completely Disagree- 3.85%
I understand the reasons for PBIS implementation.	Completely Agree- 20.0%	Somewhat Agree- 60.0%	Somewhat Disagree- 16.0%	Completely Disagree- 4.0%
How would you rate your perception of the potential benefits of PBIS?	Waste of Time- 3.85%	Limited- 42.31%	Helpful- 38.46%	Exceptional- 15.38%
There are more elements that promote the success of PBIS than obstacles that hinder its progress.	Completely Agree- 7.69%	Somewhat Agree- 61.54%	Somewhat Disagree- 30.77%	Completely Disagree- 0.0%

A total of 5 administrators were emailed requests to participate in the PBIS Perception Survey. Four of the administrators who were emailed requests participated in the survey. All 4 administrators affirmed that they agreed to the terms of the Informed Consent (Question 1). Three of the administrators answered the remaining six questions.

One administrator skipped the remaining six questions. The results of the administrator survey are below.

Question 2: What is your knowledge level of PBIS? The majority of the respondents, 66.67%, indicated they had a "proficient" knowledge of PBIS while 33.33% signified they had "limited" knowledgeable about PBIS. None of the respondents suggested they had neither "expert" nor "zero" knowledge about PBIS.

Question 3: How would you rate the importance of PBIS in relation to improving your school climate? Each of the respondents, 100%, indicated that PBIS was "helpful" in relation to improving school climate. None of the respondents signified the importance to school climate as "limited," "exceptional," or a "waste of time".

Question 4: There are more barriers that prevent the success of PBIS than components that promote its success. Most respondents, 66.67%, "somewhat disagreed" that there were more barriers to PBIS than components that promoted its success, and 33.33% "completely disagreed". None of the respondents "completely agreed" or "somewhat agreed" with this statement.

Question 5: I understand the reasons for PBIS implementation. The majority of respondents, 66.67%, reported that they "somewhat agreed" that they understood the reasons for PBIS implementation, and 33.33% "completely agreed". None of the respondents "somewhat agreed," or "completely disagreed".

Question 6: How would you rate your perception of the potential benefits of PBIS? Most of the respondents, 66.66%, signified that the potential benefits of PBIS were "exceptional," and 33.33% identified the potential benefits as "helpful". None of the respondents perceived the benefits of PBIS to be "limited" or a "waste of time".

Question 7: There are more elements that promote the success of PBIS than obstacles that hinder its progress. The majority of respondents, 66.67%, revealed that they "somewhat agreed" there were more elements that promoted the success of PBIS than hindered its progress while 33.33% "completely agreed". None of the respondents "somewhat disagreed" or "completely disagreed" with this statement. Specific respondent data are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Administrator Survey Findings

Question	Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4
Informed Consent	Yes-100%	No-100%		
What is your knowledge level of PBIS?	None-0.00%	Limited-33.33%	Proficient-66.67%	Expert-0.00%
How would you rate the importance of PBIS in relation to improving your school climate?	Waste of Time-0.00%	Limited-0.00%	Helpful-100%	Exceptional-0.00%
There are more barriers that prevent the success of PBIS than components that promote its success.	Completely Agree-0.00%	Somewhat Agree-0.00%	Somewhat Disagree-66.67%	Completely Disagree-33.33%
I understand the reasons for PBIS implementation.	Completely Agree-33.33%	Somewhat Agree-66.67%	Somewhat Disagree-0.00%	Completely Disagree-0.00%
How would you rate your perception of the potential benefits of PBIS?	Waste of Time-0.00%	Limited-0.00%	Helpful-33.33%	Exceptional-66.67%

There are more elements that promote the success of PBIS than obstacles that hinder its progress.	Completely Agree-33.33%	Somewhat Agree-66.67%	Helpful-0.00%	Exceptional-0.00%

Qualitative Findings

The descriptive findings from the teacher and administrator interviews are reported below (See Tables 9 and 10). The findings included 4 prominent themes in the teacher responses and 4 prominent themes in the administrator responses. Teacher themes included Teacher Understanding of PBIS, Potential Benefits, Implementation Barriers, and Factors Positively Affecting Implementation. Similarly, administrator themes consisted of Administration Understanding of PBIS, Potential Benefits, Implementation Barriers, and Factors Positively Affecting Implementation.

Table 9
High School Teacher Perceptions of PBIS Categories and Themes

Categories	Common Categories	Themes
Positive Behavior Recognition	Positive Behavior Recognition	Teacher Understanding of PBIS
Slow Process	Slow Process	
Build Good Habits	Adult Changes	
Adult Changes	Limited/Inaccurate Understanding	
Teach Proper Behaviors		
Behavior System		
Limited/Inaccurate Understanding		
Improved Student Character	Student Character Improvements	Potential Benefits
Safety		
Positive Relationships	Relationship Improvements	
Improved Student Outlooks	School Climate Improvements	
Improved School Climate		
Society Improvements		
Improved Social Skills		
Increased Focus on Consistency		

Lack of Buy-In Inconsistency Teacher Burnout No Understanding of Why Lack of Communication No Staff Cohesion Minimal Teacher Feedback Negative Teacher Views of PBIS Lack of Understanding of Student Culture	Lack of Communication Inconsistency Lack of Buy-In	Implementation Barriers
Administrative Support Student Buy-In PBIS Team Buy-In PBIS Flexibility Use of Other Schools as Examples Teacher Support for PBIS	Student Buy-In Administrative Support Use of Other Schools as Examples	Factors Positively Affecting Implementation

Theme 1: Teacher Understanding of PBIS. In order to fully gauge the respondents' perspectives, each participant was first asked to explain what they knew about PBIS. The researcher determined that an unclear definition of PBIS would alter participant responses on other questions. Even though some of the answers were not aligned with the PBIS framework, the majority of the participants indicated that PBIS was about positive behavior recognition, adult behavior changes, it was a slow process, and some revealed they had a limited or inaccurate understanding of PBIS.

Positive behavior recognition was defined as affirmative recognition for appropriate behaviors. In regards to positive behavior recognition, Patrick stated, "I understand the concept of it, in terms of trying to reinforce with positive behavior" (May, 2018). Additionally, James said, ". . . not that we're throwing discipline out the window, but more of a form of trying to encourage students to do what's right as opposed to

punishing them for what's wrong" (May, 2018). Finally, Susan described PBIS as "Trying to encourage kids to have the right behaviors" (May, 2018).

The concept of PBIS influencing adult behavior changes was also a common category amongst the respondents. For the purposes of this study, adult behavior changes were the instances that adults adapted their views and actions to be more understanding of student circumstances. For example Ellen described PBIS as

> . . . something more for the adults to change the mindsets of the adults. A lot of people think that we are just bribing children to behave, but it really is to think about the world in which we live now, and how we approach discipline, and how we approach teaching (May, 2018).

Furthermore, Julia stated,

> I really feel like it kind of starts with the adults because the students are only going to react to what the adults do, and if we're all on the same page, and we all hold each other accountable from the top to us, I think it will be better (May, 2018).

Many of the participants also understood the implementation of PBIS to be a slow process. According to Steven, "We're not going to have a little meeting and everybody says oh yeah, and then PBIS is going to go. It's going to be a slow process, and we just have to work at it" (May, 2018). Similarly, Monica agreed that it is

> important to take baby steps, even during the implementation process . . . if you throw it all at them at once, they'll do some of it good, or they might do all of it okay. But, then if you do one at a time, I feel like you'll have more time to focus and make each piece excellent . . . (May, 2018).

Finally, several of the participants indicated they had a limited knowledge of PBIS or provided an answer that was not relevant to the PBIS framework. For example, when asked what he knew about PBIS, James said, "Not a whole bunch right now." Similarly, Laura stated, "I personally don't know a whole lot about it."

Theme 2: Potential Benefits of PBIS. Another prominent theme amongst the teacher respondents was the potential benefits of PBIS. The interview questions that inquired about the importance of PBIS in relation to improving school climate and the perception of the potential benefits of PBIS were used to develop this theme. The most mentioned categories for this theme were student character improvements, relationship improvements, and school climate improvements.

Student character improvements was a highly mentioned category in relation to the potential benefits of PBIS. For the purposes of this study, character was defined as the moral fiber of which student actions were based. Steven explained that PBIS can "help students become adults and make adult decisions that are positive, progressive, helpful to everybody . . ." (May, 2018). Additionally, Julia stated that PBIS can benefit students by "teaching students the right way because that's really in essence what needs to be done. Like what is the right way to handle something so it doesn't end in a discipline referral" (May, 2018). Finally, Steven declared,

> . . . if all they're doing is going to survive high school and graduate and then be stuck in the system again with no positive outlook, then we're not doing our job here, so hopefully not only are we going to teach them our subject . . . but show them they can succeed . . . they can be positive members of society (May, 2018).

Relationship improvements was another highly mentioned category. Relationships were defined as the connection between individuals. For instance, Ellen stated about her students that ". . . it has more to do with building those relationships" (May, 2018). Patrick added to the concept of building student relationships by stating,

> . . . I'm always in the hall, always talking to students I don't even teach. Make it a point that I try and find something that interests them . . . When I get that, then we have a personal relationship . . . Now, they have respect for me, and they care about my opinion (May, 2018).

Additionally, Patrick said that teacher and parent relationships have been improved. "If I have a student that did something positive, I will contact that parent and tell them what the student did. This usually reinforces the appropriate behavior because mama was really happy about the phone call" (May, 2018).

School climate improvement was the most mentioned category for the potential benefits of PBIS theme. Climate was defined as the feeling individuals had toward the school. In regards to climate, Patrick stated about the students, "All they know is negative, and that's what they expect. When we change it, then we start to get a different result" (May, 2018). Additionally, Steven discussed the effects of a positive climate

> . . . life is better for me as an individual. I have more energy. I have more focus. I have more effort, and I'm assuming that would be for other teachers and when the teachers are doing that, administrators' jobs are easier . . . and less discipline issues and in the school anyway, and everybody's life just gets better and better. It's a spiral effect (May, 2018).

Monica also commented on the concept of a positive spiral in reference to school climate.

> I think it trickles down with positive school climate, because if more students start trying to reach those goals, and they're showing those positive behaviors, I believe, you know smiles are contagious, positivity is contagious, and I feel like it would spread all over the school and be a more positive culture, positive environment (May, 2018).

Theme 3: Implementation Barriers. Even though most of the interview participants perceived the utilization of PBIS to produce potential benefits, all of participants discussed prospective barriers to implementation. To gain their perceptions, each participant was asked directly to discuss these barriers. The categories that were mentioned most frequently were lack of communication, lack of consistency, and faculty buy-in.

Lack of communication was a common category discussed as a barrier to PBIS implementation. For the purposes of this study, communication was defined as the transfer of information about PBIS from the school's administration and PBIS leadership team to the rest of the faculty. For instance, James said, ". . . it's not super clear to all the teachers exactly what it (PBIS) is and what we're supposed to be doing . . . what is our role in doing what's required?" (May, 2018). Laura echoed this statement, "You know there could be groups that are working on it, but if it's not communicated to the rest of the staff, it's not going to be successful" (May, 2018). Steven furthered the discussion by adding "There was no discussion about where we are going, and what our vision is. It

was here's the PBIS program. This is what you do in it, and let's move forward" (May, 2018).

Another common category for implementation barriers was inconsistency. Inconsistency was characterized as the handling of discipline issues both by teachers and administrators in an unpredictable manner. Julia stated,

> I think . . . we have a habit of saying that we're going to do something, but we don't . . . follow through. And so the culture is the students know that the adults are not serious . . . so I've seen kids that normally were not discipline problems, are very bold (May, 2018).

Similarly, Julia said, "The barriers I see is we still have some children that do some things that are, I won't say punished necessarily, but they definitely need to receive consequences for what they've done" (May, 2018). Furthermore, Julia revealed, ". . . consistency. That is going to be anyone's biggest barrier because it requires everyone in the building acting the exact same way in order to get the same results. Being that consistent, that consistency, I feel personally we lack that" (May, 2018).

Faculty buy-in was the most mentioned barrier to PBIS implementation. Buy-in was identified as the entire faculty's willingness to accept and incorporate the school's PBIS system. Several participants expressed a belief that teachers were not buying in because they did not believe the system was going to last. For example, Ellen said, "I think right now is, people are not trying to buy in because they're just like, let's just let it run its course and then we won't have to deal with this" (May, 2018). Likewise, Steven stated, "From a teacher's perspective, it's another program to do, and especially if we haven't been trained and bought into it, and aren't part of the process" (May, 2018).

Finally, Patrick said, "I see the teachers' perspectives too. 'It's not going to work. We tried this 20 years ago.' That type of stuff. The buy-in is the biggest obstacle, I think" (May, 2018).

Theme 4: Factors Positively Affecting PBIS Implementation. In addition to the recognition of implementation barriers, each participant also identified factors that positively affected PBIS implementation. To gain their perceptions, each participant was directly asked to discuss these elements. The categories that were mentioned most frequently were teacher support for PBIS, student buy-in, administrative support, and the use of other schools as examples.

Student buy-in of PBIS was one of the common categories most mentioned by participants as a factor that positively affected PBIS implementation. For the purposes of this study, student buy-in was defined as the willingness of the students to accept and participate in PBIS initiatives. For example, Monica said, "Every six weeks when we got a progress report, if you're passing all of your classes you brought your progress report and got a lollipop. You'd be surprised what kids would do for a sucker" (May, 2018). Patrick added about this practice,

> I saw one kid tell another, 'I want a lollipop,' and the student responded with 'Well, pass all your classes.' I started seeing that more and more in the hallways. It was baby steps, but hopefully that carries over in a greater magnitude in the future (May, 2018).

Additionally, James said,

> . . . the kids originally thought the suckers for seven was silly, but then they enjoyed it once they started. So once those things are presented in a positive

manner and the kids start to see positive impact, I'm sure more and more kids will buy in (May, 2018).

Another common category for factors that positively affected PBIS implementation was administrative support for PBIS. Administrative support was characterized as the belief that the school's administration supported the implementation of PBIS. Patrick stated, "I can see the administration trying to have this positive reinforcement . . . They're enthusiastic about it" (May, 2018). Furthermore, Monica stated, "Our principal has said that there will be a 100% buy-in. So, it's not going to be optional" (May, 2018).

The use of other schools as examples was the most mentioned factor that positively affected PBIS implementation. The use of other schools as examples was identified as high schools that were exemplar in the utilization of PBIS. Several participants referenced another high school in Middle Georgia that a group of teachers and administrators from the study school visited. For instance, Monica said, "After visiting the school, I was a lot less overwhelmed by PBIS, seeing it in action and seeing it actually be successful . . . it really made me focus and understand exactly what it was" (May, 2018). Likewise, Ellen stated, "Just to see it. It was something that we were like, 'I think we're already doing this.' or 'this is what we need to tweak.' Just seeing it in action helps so much" (May, 2018).

The visit also helped give Julia a clear vision of the implementation process.

I'm looking at the long term pictures, and I know the road to get there is going to be long and bumpy, but I think kind of in the beginning, you're going to have a

rough morale, but I think once we get to where it's the norm, I think it will be much better for us (May, 2018).

Furthermore, Laura did not participate in the visit; however, she was positively influenced from the feedback. "The people that were on the visitation team, I respect all of them, and they've come back, and they've been super positive. I trust them, that if they're positive then it's something that I can get on board with" (May, 2018).

Table 10
High School Administrator Perceptions of PBIS Categories and Themes

Categories	Common Categories	Themes
Teaching Behaviors Positive Recognition Limiting Negative Interactions Slow Process System to Decrease Referrals Communication	Teaching Behaviors Positive Recognition	Administrator Understanding of PBIS
Climate Improved School-Parent Relationships Consistency Provide Additional Strategies to Teachers	Climate	Potential Benefits
Large Amount of Teachers Adult Belief Systems Buy-In Structural Barriers Watering Down Incentives	Adult Belief Systems Lack of Buy-In	Implementation Barriers
Working Toward Consistency Student Focus Use of Other Schools as Examples Student and Staff Voice in Implementation Student Buy-In Administrative Support	Administrative Support Use of Other Schools as Examples	Factors Positively Affecting Implementation

Theme 1: Administrator Understanding of PBIS. In order to measure the respondents' perspectives, each participant was first asked to explain what they knew about PBIS. The researcher determined that an unclear definition of PBIS would alter participant responses on other questions. Both participants indicated that PBIS was about the teaching of appropriate student behaviors and positive behavior recognition.

The teaching of appropriate student behaviors was one of the common categories most mentioned by both participants as part of their understanding of PBIS. For the purposes of this study, the teaching of appropriate behaviors was defined as the process of educating students on proper behavior skills. For example, Greg said about PBIS,

> I thought it was a lot of bribery and reward. And the more I got into it, it was as far from that as I could imagine. PBIS, to me is a different mindset, and thinking about how to train our children, our students . . . If a kid doesn't know how to tie his shoe, we teach him to tie his shoe. We don't send him to his room. We don't not give him supper. So when a kid misbehaves in school, what do we do? We send them to ISS. We send them home. Are we really working with that behavior? (May, 2018).

Robert agreed with the concept of PBIS being about teaching appropriate student behaviors. "I'm a believer in teaching positive behaviors. It's just my nature" (May, 2018).

Another common category for administrator understanding of PBIS was positive behavior recognition. Positive behavior recognition was defined as affirmative recognition for appropriate behaviors. In regards to this category, Greg stated,

> Right now there's zero incentive for students to come to school here in the county. We've taken the attendance policy pretty much away . . . We have to get kids coming to school. We look to do a type of celebration once a semester and tie things like low referrals, low absences, and no tardies to it . . . We also gave blow pops to the students who were passing all of their classes every six weeks. Even though a lot of teachers didn't think it was going to work, we walked the halls and looked at the students who were left in those classrooms. They were mad that they didn't get to participate, and a lot of them told me they were going to work harder (May, 2018).

Robert agreed with the success of the use of lollipops for positive behavior recognition.

> That lollipop was important to those children . . . that was a positive for two reasons. One, it was a positive thing for students to go down there and somebody give them something simple. The other thing is I think sometimes you get wrapped up in negative behavior, and I think teachers, along with administrators do this. You forget that sometimes it's just this handful of students that are causing most of the referrals (May, 2018).

Theme 2: Potential Benefits of PBIS. Another prominent theme amongst the administrator respondents was the potential benefits of PBIS. The interview questions that inquired about the importance of PBIS in relation to improving school climate and the perception of the potential benefits of PBIS were used to develop this theme. Only one theme merged as a common category which was school climate improvements.

Climate was defined as the feeling individuals had toward the school. In regards to climate, Greg stated about positively affecting the school's climate,

> I come on the morning announcements and say, 'It's Positive Tuesday. We have 10 positive statements before 10:00 AM. Ten different people, ten positive statements.' Kids love it. Call it PBIS, call it whatever you want. Some days I get on there on Thursday, and say 'It's High-Five Thursday. Make sure you give a teacher a high-five or a hug and let them know how much they're appreciated.' Just being positive. Just having a positive mindset has changed our culture (May, 2018).

In reference to improving the school's climate, Greg said the following about the actions of one of the school's teachers,

> . . . she found this idea, and she wanted to see what would happen. She took a yellow sticky note, and she put a positive note on there. Something like 'You are beautiful' or something. She put it on the mirror of a girl's restroom just to see what would happen if she left a pack of sticky notes there. It was unbelievable how many students wrote positive notes and stuck it on the wall up there. It was just really, really interesting to see that unfold. That wasn't a school initiative. That was just one teacher that said, 'I'm going to see what will happen here' (May, 2018).

Theme 3: Implementation Barriers. Even though both interview participants perceived the utilization of PBIS to produce potential benefits, both also discussed prospective barriers to implementation. To gain their perceptions, both participants were asked directly to discuss these barriers. The most frequently mentioned categories were adult belief systems and faculty buy-in.

Adult belief systems was a common category discussed as a barrier to PBIS implementation. For the purposes of this study, adult belief systems was defined as the principles that were contrary to PBIS practices the adults in the school maintained. In regards to this category, Greg stated about staff members with these beliefs,

> . . . they'll say, 'We're not punishing them. What are you doing? Kids are getting off scott free.' No they're not. We're teaching them how to behave. And that's part of being a parent. That's part of being a teacher. It's discipline. It's just a different form of discipline (May, 2018).

Robert also asserted,

> Then it's also the barrier of everybody's belief on what discipline should be. Again, I pointed out in the beginning that a lot of people are under the belief that once you reach age 15, 16, 17, or 18, you should know how to act, and you know what's appropriate and inappropriate. There is some truth to that; however, just because a student goes from 8th grade to 9th grade doesn't automatically cure them into being a perfect citizen (May, 2018).

Another common category for implementation barriers was faculty buy-in. Buy-in was identified as the entire faculty's willingness to accept and incorporate the school's PBIS system. Referencing faculty buy-in, Greg said, "So getting that teacher buy-in to see it through a different set of eyes and the way they process discipline in their classroom is probably the biggest barrier that I see coming" (May, 2018). Additionally, Robert exclaimed,

> In addition, education tends to have a lot of things that go through cycles. When you have veteran teachers that have taught for a long time, a big barrier with them

> is this is the newest product. It's going away so we just need to wait it out and deal with it . . . I was at one conference, and one of the speakers said elementary school is like a little boat that you can turn around, and middle school is more like a tugboat. It's bigger, but you can still make the turn. High schools are like freight ships where it takes a long time to turn it in the direction, and it needs some assisting along the way in order to turn it completely around (May, 2018).

Theme 4: Factors Positively Affecting PBIS Implementation. In addition to the recognition of implementation barriers, both participants also identified factors that positively affected PBIS implementation. To gain their perceptions, both participants were asked to discuss these elements. The categories mentioned most frequently were administrative support and the use of other schools as examples.

Administrative support was one of the common categories most mentioned by participants as a factor that positively affected PBIS implementation. For the purposes of this study, administrative support was characterized as the belief that the school's administration supported the implementation of PBIS. For instance, Greg stated about PBIS,

> I think that comes from me at the top, and how I handle myself in the building, and how I act rather than react. . . and that comes from having clear expectations and clear open lines of communication with everyone involved (May, 2018).

Furthermore, Robert reiterated Greg's statement about the administration's leadership of PBIS, ". . . it's got to be from the top down. People have to demonstrate it. You have to believe in it, and you have to communicate that to other people" (May, 2018).

Another common category for factors that positively affected PBIS implementation was the use of other schools as examples. The use of other schools as examples was identified as high schools that were exemplar in the utilization of PBIS. In reference to another high school in Middle Georgia that a group of teachers and administrators from the study school visited, Greg said, "It was phenomenal . . . that's where I got hooked. I would make this mandatory for all schools because if they don't have the right mindset, they're not going to go look at it" (May, 2018). Additionally, referring in general to the success of PBIS in other high schools, Robert said,

> . . . you see success across the state, of other schools that have implemented PBIS. Any time you see success in one school, for whatever it may be, behavior, academics, whatever. I think you've got to do your part to look into that and figure out what is that success, and how we can bring that to our school (May, 2018).

Results

Quantitative Results

The web-based PBIS Perception Survey was used to gauge teacher and administrator perceptions of PBIS for this study. This survey was a Likert-type instrument comprised of seven questions. Teachers and administrators were asked to rank their views on each question. A total of 95 classroom teachers and 5 administrators from the study school were emailed requests to participate in the PBIS Perception Survey. The response rate included 27 teachers and 4 administrators that participated in the survey.

Question 2: What is your knowledge level of PBIS? No respondents suggested they had "expert" knowledge about PBIS while 29.63% of the teachers and 66.67% of the

administrators signified they were “proficiently” knowledgeable. Additionally, 70.37% of the teachers and 33.33% of the administrators indicated they had “limited” knowledge. None of the respondents suggested they had expert knowledge about PBIS.

Question 3: How would you rate the importance of PBIS in relation to improving your school climate? Only 3.70% of the teachers and none of the administrators revealed that PBIS was “exceptional” while 55.56% of the teachers and 100% of the administrators indicted that PBIS was helpful in the improvement of school climate. Furthermore, 37.04% of the teachers and no administrators signified it had a “limited” affect. Merely 3.70% of the teachers responded that it was a “waste of time”.

Question 4: There are more barriers that prevent the success of PBIS than components that promote its success. Only 3.70% of the teacher respondents and none of the administrator respondents “completely agreed” while 59.26% of the teachers and none of the administrators “somewhat agreed” there were more barriers that prevented than components that promoted PBIS success. Additionally, 33.33% of teachers and 66.67% of administrators “somewhat agreed” with this statement. Only 3.70% of teachers and 33.33% of administrators “completely disagreed”.

Question 5: I understand the reasons for PBIS implementation. The respondents who “completely agreed” with the understanding of the reasons for PBIS implementation in their school consisted of 19.23% of teachers and 33.33% of administrators while 61.54% of teacher respondents and 66.67% of administrator respondents “somewhat agreed”. Furthermore, 15.38% of teachers and no administrators “somewhat disagreed” with this statement. Merely 3.85% of teachers and none of the administrators “completely disagreed”.

Question 6: How would you rate your perception of the potential benefits of PBIS? The respondents who perceived the potential benefits of PBIS to be "exceptional" consisted of 14.84% of teachers and 66.66% of administrators while 40.74% of teacher respondents and 33.33% of administrator respondents perceived PBIS to be "helpful". Additionally, 40.74% of teachers and no administrators believed PBIS had "limited" benefits. Only 3.70% of teachers and none of the administrators perceived PBIS to be a "waste of time".

Question 7: There are more elements that promote the success of PBIS than obstacles that hinder its progress. Only 7.41% of teacher respondents and 33.33% of administrator respondents "completely agreed" while 62.96% of teachers and 66.67% of administrators "somewhat agreed" there were more elements that promoted the success of PBIS than obstacles that hindered its progress. Furthermore, 29.63% of teacher respondents and no administrator respondents "somewhat disagreed" with this statement. Only 7.41% of teachers and none of the administrators "completely disagreed".

Qualitative Results

After the collection and analysis of the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews, four prominent themes emerged. The development of themes was based on the perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes of each participant in regards to PBIS.

The first theme was understanding of PBIS. Each participant was asked directly to explain their knowledge level of PBIS during individual interviews. The teachers consistently recognized that PBIS was about changes in adult behaviors, was a slow process, or had limited or inaccurate understandings while the administrators identified the teaching of appropriate behaviors as a common category. The participants that

associated PBIS with changes in adult behaviors agreed that in order for PBIS to be successful in the study school, many teachers had to change their philosophies of discipline. The teacher respondents also understood that the implementation of PBIS was going to take time, and they would not see substantial results immediately. Additionally, the administrator participants acknowledged that an important aspect of PBIS was the teaching of appropriate behaviors which placed more emphasis on educating students on the correct behaviors as opposed to focusing solely on punitive consequences.

The only common category that was identified by both teachers and administrators was positive behavior recognition. This category was mentioned by every participant in the study. Some participants associated this concept with the distribution of tangible items such as lollipops for passing all classes while other participants identified this perception with positive verbal recognition.

The potential benefits of PBIS was another theme identified by the respondents. The teachers consistently recognized that PBIS was about student character improvements and relationship improvements. The participants that associated PBIS with student character improvements perceived the utilization of PBIS could be used to ultimately make students better citizens although none of the participants defined how these improvements would be achieved. The teacher respondents also indicated relationship improvements in connection with PBIS. Some of the participants signified the enhancement of relations between teachers and students while other participants specified better relationships between teachers and parents.

The only common category mentioned by the administrator participants was the improvement of school climate. This subject was also the only one identified by both

teachers and administrators. This category was mentioned by every participant in the study. Some of the participants associated PBIS with already having improved the school's climate while others hoped that PBIS would help improve the climate.

A third theme identified by the respondents was implementation barriers. The teachers consistently recognized that lack of communication and inconsistency were barriers to PBIS implementation. The participants that identified lack of communication as a barrier to implementation indicated deficiencies in knowledge about the happenings of PBIS because of limited communication. Some of the respondents that identified inconsistency as a barrier perceived that the school's administration lacked consistency in their discipline decisions while others acknowledged other teachers as lacking consistency. Additionally, the administrator respondents identified adult belief systems as a barrier to PBIS implementation. Both participants recognized that staff members who harbored beliefs that were contrary to PBIS practices made PBIS implementation more difficult.

The only common category that was identified by both teachers and administrators was lack of teacher buy-in. This category was mentioned by eight out of the ten participants in the study. Some of the respondents perceived that several teachers perceived PBIS as the newest innovation that would not last while others indicated some teachers viewed it as an additional obligation.

The final theme identified by respondents was factors positively affecting PBIS implementation. The teachers consistently recognized student buy-in as a factor that positively affected PBSI implementation. Participants not only mentioned that most of the students willingly accepted and participated in PBIS activities, but those students who

did not qualify for incentives felt positive peer pressure to achieve at a greater level in the future in order to receive the incentives.

Two common categories were mentioned by both teacher and administrator respondents. First, administrative support was the perception that the school's administration both encouraged and advocated for the implementation of PBIS. Additionally, the use of other schools as examples of models for PBIS was another category mentioned by both teachers and administrators. Most of the respondents referenced another high school that a team from the study school had visited. The overall perception from this visit was an increased understanding of what the study school's staff wanted to achieve.

Response to Research Questions

This research study was guided by one overarching research question: What are high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Additionally, findings were associated with three research subquestions. These questions were answered using the initial data obtained through the quantitative PBIS Perception Survey then expounded upon with the qualitative data collected through 10 individual interviews.

Research Subquestion 1

What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS? In the initial phase of the study, the researcher utilized the PBIS Perception Survey to determine a baseline for teacher perceptions. Through this data, the researcher concluded that 70.37% of the respondents had "limited" knowledge of PBIS and 29.63% had "proficient" knowledge while 55.56% perceived PBIS to be "helpful" and 37.04% recognized PBIS as "limited," and 3.70% perceived PBIS to be "exceptional" and a "waste of time" in improving school

climate. Furthermore, 59.26% of respondents "somewhat agreed," 33.33% "somewhat disagreed," and 3.70% "completely agreed" and "completely disagreed" there were more barriers to PBIS success than components that promoted its success while 61.54% "somewhat agreed," 19.23% "completely agreed," 15.38% "somewhat disagreed," and 3.85% "completely disagreed" they understood the reasons PBIS was implemented in their school. Finally, 40.74% of respondents perceived the potential benefits of PBIS to be "limited" and "helpful," 14.81% perceived the potential benefits to be "exceptional," and 3.70% a "waste of time" while 62.96% of respondents "somewhat agreed" there were more elements that promoted the success of PBIS than obstacles that hindered its progress, 29.63% "somewhat disagreed," and 7.41% "completely agreed".

After acquiring the quantitative data, 8 interviews were conducted with teachers at the study school. Through the course of data analysis, the researcher identified 4 prominent themes. The first theme was teacher understanding of PBIS which was comprised of the common categories of positive behavior recognition, the understanding that PBIS was a slow process, and the perception that PBIS was about changing adult mindsets. Table 11 shows specific data for the teacher understanding theme.

Table 11
Teacher Perceptions of Understanding of PBIS

Common Category	Teacher Perceptions
Positive Behavior Recognition	All participants indicated that an aspect of PBIS was affirmative student recognition for appropriate behaviors.
Slow Process	Many participants recognized PBIS as a process that could not reach full implementation instantaneously.
Adult Changes	Many participants mentioned that an aspect of PBIS was the adaptation of adult views and actions to be more understanding of student circumstances.

Limited/Inaccurate Understanding	Several participants indicted they had limited knowledge of PBIS or responded to their knowledge of PBIS in a manner that was not consistent with the framework.

Another theme that emerged was the potential benefits of PBIS. This theme included the common categories of student character improvements, relationship improvements, and school climate improvements. Table 12 shows specific data for the teacher perceptions of the potential benefits of PBIS.

Table 12
Teacher Perceptions of Potential Benefits of PBIS

Common Category	Teacher Perceptions
Student Character Improvements	Most of the participants mentioned the potential the capability of PBIS to improve the moral fiber of which student actions were based.
Relationship Improvements	Some participants discussed the development of relationship building between teachers and students whereas others mentioned relational progress between the adults in the school and parents.
School Climate Improvements	All participants perceived PBIS had improved the school's climate whereas others believed it had the potential to improve the school's climate.

Barriers to PBIS implementation was another theme that developed through data analysis. The common categories in this theme were lack of communication, inconsistency, and lack of buy-in. Table 13 shows specific data for the teacher perceptions of barriers to PBIS implementation.

Table 13
Teacher Perceptions of Barriers to PBIS Implementation

Common Category	Teacher Perceptions
Lack of Communication	Many participants did not perceive the expectations and direction of PBIS was communicated

Inconsistency	throughout the school which caused them to be uniformed about their roles. Some participants perceived other teachers were inconsistent with discipline practices while others believed the administration was inconsistent with discipline.
Lack of Buy-In	The majority of participants discussed the probability of the entire school staff to commit to PBIS practices as a barrier to implementation.

The final theme that materialized from teacher interviews was the factors that positively affected PBIS implementation. This theme was comprised of the common categories of student buy-in, administrative support, and the use of other schools as examples. Table 14 shows specific data for the teacher perceptions of factors positively influencing PBIS implementation.

Table 14
Teacher Perceptions of Factors Positively Affecting PBIS Implementation

Common Category	Teacher Perceptions
Student Buy-In	Most of the participants perceived that many of the students willingly accepted and participated in PBIS activities.
Administrative Support	The majority of the participants recognized the administration's encouragement and promotion of PBIS.
Use of Other Schools as Examples	Many participants referenced another high school who was implementing PBIS with high degrees of fidelity which fueled their beliefs that they could achieve the same success.

Research Subquestion 2

What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? In the initial phase of the study, the researcher utilized the PBIS Perception Survey to determine a baseline for administrator perceptions. Through this data, the researcher concluded that 66.67% had "expert" knowledge of PBIS and 33.33% had "proficient" knowledge while 100%

perceived PBIS to be "helpful" in improving school climate. Furthermore, 66.67% of respondents "somewhat disagreed" and 33.33% "completely disagreed there were more barriers to PBIS success than components that promoted its success while 66.67% "somewhat agreed" and 33.33% "completely agreed" they understood the reasons that PBIS was implemented in their school. Finally, 66.67% of respondents perceived the potential benefits of PBIS to be "exceptional" and 33.33% "helpful" while 66.67% of respondents "somewhat agreed" there were more elements that promoted the success of PBIS than obstacles that hindered its progress, and 33.33% "completely agreed".

After acquiring the quantitative data, 2 interviews were conducted with administrators at the study school. Through the course of data analysis, the researcher identified 4 prominent themes. The first theme was administrator understanding of PBIS which was comprised of the common categories of teaching appropriate behaviors and positive behavior recognition. Table 15 shows specific data for the administrator understanding theme.

Table 15
Administrator Perceptions of Understanding of PBIS

Common Category	Administrator Perceptions
Teaching Behaviors	Both participants perceived that an important aspect of PBIS was the teaching of appropriate behaviors which placed more importance on educating students on the correct behaviors as instead of focusing exclusively on punitive consequences.
Positive Recognition	Both participants indicated that an aspect of PBIS was affirmative student recognition for appropriate behaviors.

Another theme that emerged was the potential benefits of PBIS. This theme included the common category of climate. Table 16 shows specific data for the administrator perceptions of the potential benefits of PBIS.

Table 16
Administrator Perceptions of Potential Benefits of PBIS

Common Category	Administrator Perceptions
Climate	Both participants perceived PBIS had improved the school's climate whereas others believed it had the potential to improve the school's climate.

Barriers to PBIS implementation was another theme that developed through data analysis. The common categories in this theme were adult belief systems and lack of staff buy-in. Table 17 shows specific data for the administrator perceptions of barriers to PBIS implementation.

Table 17
Administrator Perceptions of Barriers to PBIS Implementation

Common Category	Administrator Perceptions
Adult Belief Systems	Both participants perceived adults who maintained belief systems that were contrary to PBIS practices to be barriers to implementation.
Lack of Buy-In	Both participants discussed the probability of the entire school staff to commit to PBIS practices as a barrier to implementation.

The final theme that materialized from teacher interviews was the factors that positively affected PBIS implementation. This theme was comprised of the common categories of administrative support and the use of other schools as examples. Table 18 shows specific data for the administrator perceptions of factors positively influencing PBIS implementation.

Table 18
Administrator Perceptions of Factors Positively Affecting PBIS Implementation

Common Category	Administrator Perceptions
Administrative Support	Both participants recognized the administration's encouragement and promotion of PBIS.
Use of Other Schools as Examples	Many participants referenced another high school who was implementing PBIS with high degrees of fidelity which fueled their beliefs that they could achieve the same success.

Research Subquestion 3

To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? In the PBIS Perception Survey, 66.67% of the administrators indicated they had "proficient" knowledge of PBIS while only 26.92% of the teachers revealed they had "proficient" knowledge. Conversely, 33.33% of the administrators indicated they had "limited" knowledge of PBIS while 73.08% of teachers revealed they had "limited" knowledge.

The quantitative results on PBIS understanding were supported by the qualitative data as well. Even though the majority of the teacher respondents described their knowledge of PBIS by detailing components of the PBIS framework, several respondents either indicated they had limited comprehension or responded in a manner that indicated they had an inaccurate understanding. Alternately, both administrator respondents had thorough and accurate responses in reference to their knowledge of PBIS.

In reference to the potential benefits of PBIS, 14.81% of the teacher respondents denoted that PBIS was "exceptional," 40.74% "helpful," and 40.74% "limited". Alternately, 66.67% of the administrators responded that PBIS was "exceptional," and 33.33% that it was "helpful". Interestingly, the qualitative results did not support the

quantitative data. In sum, the teachers discussed eight different categories, three of which were common categories. Conversely, the administrators mentioned five different categories, and only one of those was common between the respondents: climate.

In regards to the importance of PBIS in relation to improving the school's climate, 100% of the administrators responded on the PBIS Perception Survey they believed it was "helpful". In contrast, 55.56% of the teachers responded that PBIS was "helpful" and 37.04% indicated it was "limited" for improving the school's climate. However, all eight teacher respondents revealed confidence that PBIS could improve school climate if school-wide communication was improved, all of the teachers committed to PBIS processes, and the faculty members were consistent with discipline procedures.

The results of the PBIS Perception Survey also indicated 66.67% of the administrators and 33.33% of the teachers "strongly disagreed" there were more barriers that prevented the success of PBIS than components that promoted its success. Conversely, 33.33% of administrators "completely disagreed" with this statement while 59.26% of teachers "strongly agreed." Additionally, the qualitative results referencing the perception that more barriers to PBIS success existed than components promoting its success supported the quantitative data. In sum, the teachers discussed nine different barriers whereas the administrators mentioned five. Furthermore, they discussed three common categories and the administrators mentioned two. Only one of the five different common categories discussed between the teachers and administrators (lack of teacher buy-in) was the same.

Finally, in relation to the elements that promoted the success of PBIS, on the PBIS Perception Survey, 66.67% of the administrator respondents and 62.96% of the

teacher respondents “strongly agreed” there were more elements that promoted the success of PBIS than obstacles that hindered its progress. In addition, 33.33% of the administrators indicated they “completely agreed,” and 29.63% of the teachers “strongly disagreed” with this statement. Even though the percentage of both administrator and teacher respondents who signified they “strongly agreed” were similar, a third of each group responded much differently leaving the quantitative results inconclusive. However, the qualitative data is much more similar to the teachers and administrators who responded “strongly agreed”. The teacher respondents identified five different categories, three of which were common categories, and the administrators denoted six different categories, two of which were common categories. In sum, both the teachers and administrators identified two identical common categories: administrative support and use of other schools as examples.

Summary

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed methods study was to examine administrator and teacher perceptions of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia suburban high school. The quantitative data for this study were obtained through the usage of the PBIS Perception survey which was completed by 27 teachers and 3 administrators at the study school. Additionally, interviews were conducted with two administrators and eight teachers about their perceptions of SWPBIS.

On the PBIS Perception Survey, 70.37% of the teacher respondents indicated they had a “limited” understanding of PBIS whereas 29.63% revealed a “proficient” comprehension, and 55.56% signified PBIS as “helpful” to improving the school’s climate while 37.04% suggested it had “limited” effects. Additionally, 59.26% of the

teacher respondents “somewhat agreed” there were more barriers that prevented the success of PBIS than factors that promoted its success whereas 33.33% “somewhat disagreed,” and 40.74% perceived the potential benefits of PBIS to be “helpful,” 40.74% recognized the potential benefits as “limited,” and 14.81% “exceptional”. Finally, 62.96% of teacher respondents “somewhat agreed” there were more elements that promoted the success of PBIS than inhibiters whereas 29.63% “somewhat disagreed”. The qualitative results supported the quantitative data in each of these areas with the exception of the potential benefits and importance to school climate.

In response to the PBIS Perception Survey, 66.67% of the administrator respondents indicated they had a “proficient” understanding of PBIS whereas 33.33% revealed a “limited” comprehension, and 100% signified PBIS as “helpful” to improving the school’s climate. Additionally, 66.67% of the administrator respondents “somewhat disagreed” there were more barriers that prevented the success of PBIS than factors that promoted its success whereas 33.33% “completely disagreed,” and 66.67% perceived the potential benefits of PBIS to be “exceptional,” and 33.33% “helpful”. Finally, 66.67% of administrator respondents “somewhat agreed” there were more elements that promoted the success of PBIS than inhibiters whereas 33.33% “somewhat agreed”. The qualitative results supported the quantitative data in each of these areas.

As a group, the administrators had a more complete understanding of PBIS than did the teachers. Even though the teachers’ survey data contradicted the interview results, the teachers as well as the administrators perceived PBIS to be potentially beneficial to the overall success of the school. One of those potential benefits was the school’s climate. Both administrators affirmed their belief that PBIS could improve the school’s climate. In

contrast, each teacher respondent indicated the same belief; however, they suggested that communication had to be improved, all of the school's teachers had to commit to PBIS processes, and the faculty members had to be consistent with discipline procedures as a prerequisite.

One of the areas of concern for both the administrators and teachers were the barriers that prevented the implementation of PBIS. The teachers described three common categories related to barriers, and the administrators detailed two common categories. Only one of these five categories (lack of teacher buy-in) was identical. Finally, in reference to the factors that facilitated PBIS implementation, the teacher respondents characterized three common categories, and the administrators detailed two. The two groups identified two identical common categories: administrative support and use of other schools as examples.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECCOMENDATIONS

Summary

Student discipline was an essential responsibility for public school officials within United States public schools because the preservation of the physical safety of staff and students as well as the sustainment of well-managed classrooms supported student learning (Eckes & Russo, 2012; Mayworm & Sharkey, 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002). However, there was an absence of agreement among education officials as to which discipline methods were appropriate (Casella, 2006; Schiro, 1985; Stouffer, 1952; Toby, 1998). Traditionally, educators used consequences as a means of punishing students who demonstrated inappropriate behaviors. Although, the employments of some of these consequences were found to have undesirable effects (Allman & Slate, 2011; Eckes & Russo, 2012; Fabelo et al., 2011; Flannery et al., 2012; Simson, 2014; Skiba, et al., 2014).

In contrast, PBIS was a framework originated to develop positive school climates through the formation of clear behavior expectations, incentives for proper conduct, the encouragement of positive relationships, and decision making centered around data (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2002). The full PBIS framework included three tiers of intensifying levels of interventions. However, most of the schools that implemented PBIS only employed the first tier, which was also known as SWPBIS and involved whole school settings (Kincaid et al., 2015; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

While the use of SWPBIS was discovered to produce beneficial results in elementary and middle school settings, high school implementation was scarce (Horner, 2013). The reasons for the shortage of high school implementation included distinctive barriers such as large student and staff populations, teacher departmentalization, and staff member acceptance and buy-in (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; McIntosh et al., 2015; Molloy et al., 2013). Consequently, the lack of high school SWPBIS implementation also produced a gap in the literature.

The purpose of this study was to examine administrator and teacher perceptions of SWPBIS in a Middle Georgia suburban high school. The quantitative data for this explanatory, sequential mixed methods study was obtained through the usage of the PBIS Perception survey. This data was analyzed statistically using the mean of each response, and these results were used to establish a baseline for the study. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two administrators and eight teachers about their perceptions of SWPBIS. Each interview was recorded with a password protected electronic recording device and transcribed through the use of a web-based transcription service.

This study was conducted in one high school in a Middle Georgia school district that was in the first year of SWPBIS implementation. The initial collection of data was obtained through the PBIS Perception survey which was emailed to the school's principal who then forwarded it to the school's certified staff members. The data from this survey were analyzed quantitatively. The survey was comprised of seven Likert-type survey questions used to measure administrator and teacher perceptions of SWPBIS in the study school.

The second data collection segment involved one-on-one semi-structured interviews with two administrators and eight teachers in the study school. Each participant was asked seven semi-structured questions about their knowledge, perceptions of the benefits, implementation, and barriers of SWPBIS in their school. All interviews were electronically recorded then uploaded to a web-based transcription service where they were transcribed. Finally, the researcher analyzed each transcript through the constant comparison method.

Through the coding process, the researcher established categories and common categories. From the common categories, four prominent themes emerged from the common categories: understanding of PBIS, potential benefits, implementation barriers, and factors that positively affected implementation. Categories, common categories, and themes were placed in tables. Commentaries by participants were provided, as well as participant perceptions of the themes. The data in the tables were described narratively under each table.

Analysis of Research Findings

The data for this study were collected from two sources. First, quantitative data were gathered from teachers and administrators utlizing the PBIS Perception Survey and analyzed statistically by determining the statistical mean for each response. The results of this quantitative survey were used to establish a baseline for both teacher and administrator perceptions. After the collection and analysis of the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with two administrators and eight teachers. Each participant was asked the same seven questions. The interviews were digitally recorded

and transcribed through the use of a web-based transcription service. The researcher analyzed the data using the constant comparison method.

The analyzed data were used to answer one research question: What are high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Additionally, the findings were correlated with three research subquestions:

Research Subquestion 1

What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS? Through the quantitative data, the researcher determined that 70.37% of the teacher respondents had "limited" knowledge of PBIS and 29.63% had "proficient" knowledge. In regards to improving school climate, 55.56% perceived PBIS to be "helpful," 37.04% "limited," 3.70% "exceptional," and 3.70% a "waste of time". Furthermore, 59.26% of respondents "somewhat agreed," 33.33% "somewhat disagreed," 3.70% "completely agreed," and 3.70% "completely disagreed" there were more barriers to PBIS success than factors that supported its success. In response to understanding the reasons PBIS was implemented in their school, 61.54% "somewhat agreed," 19.23% "completely agreed," 15.38% "somewhat disagreed," and 3.85% "completely disagreed". Additionally, 40.74% of respondents believed the potential benefits of PBIS were "limited," 40.74% "helpful," 14.81% "exceptional," and 3.70% a "waste of time". Finally, 62.96% of respondents "somewhat agreed" there were more elements that fostered the success of PBIS than impediments that encumbered its progress, 29.63% "somewhat disagreed," and 7.41% "completely agreed".

Through the analysis of the teacher interviews, the researcher identified four prominent themes. The first theme was teacher understanding of PBIS which included the

common categories of positive behavior recognition, the understanding that PBIS was a slow process, and the perception that PBIS was about changing adult mindsets. Additionally, the potential benefits of PBIS emerged as another theme. This theme was comprised of the common categories of student character improvements, relationship improvements, and school climate improvements. A third theme that materialized during data analysis was barriers to PBIS implementation. This theme contained the common categories of communication, inconsistency, and lack of buy-in. The final theme that emerged from teacher interviews was the elements that positively influenced PBIS implementation. This theme included the common categories of student buy-in, administrative support, and the use of other schools as examples.

Research Subquestion 2

What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Through the quantitative data, the researcher determined that 66.67% of the administrator respondents had "expert" knowledge of PBIS and 33.33% had "proficient" knowledge. In regards to improving school climate, 100% perceived PBIS to be "helpful". Furthermore, 66.67% of respondents "somewhat disagreed," and 33.33% "completely disagreed," there were more barriers to PBIS success than components that promoted its success. In response to understanding the reasons PBIS was implemented in their school, 66.67% "somewhat agreed," and 33.33% "completely agreed". Additionally, 66.67% of respondents believed the potential benefits of PBIS were "limited," and 33.33% "helpful". Finally, 66.67% of respondents "somewhat agreed" there were more elements that fostered the success of PBIS than impediments that encumbered its progress, 33.33% "completely agreed".

Through the analysis of the teacher interviews, the researcher identified four prominent themes. The first theme was administrator understanding of PBIS which included the common categories of teaching appropriate behaviors and positive behavior recognition. Additionally, the potential benefits of PBIS emerged as another theme. This theme was comprised of the common category of school climate improvements. A third theme that materialized during data analysis was barriers to PBIS implementation. This theme contained the common categories of adult belief systems and lack of buy-in. The final theme that emerged from teacher interviews was the elements that positively influenced PBIS implementation. This theme included the common categories of administrative support and the use of other schools as examples.

Research Subquestion 3

To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? In the PBIS Perception Survey, 66.67% of the administrators and 26.92% of the teachers revealed they had "proficient" knowledge of PBIS while 33.33% of administrators and 73.08% of teachers indicated they had "limited" knowledge of PBIS. These quantitative results were also substantiated by the qualitative results. For instance, most of the teacher respondents explained their familiarity of PBIS by describing accurate components of the framework; however, several respondents either signified a narrow understanding of PBIS or responded in a manner that revealed they had an interpretation that was not aligned with the PBIS framework.

In response to the potential benefits of PBIS, 66.67% of the administrator respondents and 14.81% of the teacher respondents signified they were "exceptional,"

40.74% of the teachers and 33.33% of the administrators denoted the potential benefits were “helpful,” and 40.74% of the teachers responded they were “limited”. The teacher respondents’ quantitative results were not substantiated by the quantitative data as each teacher described probable benefits. In total, the teacher respondents mentioned eight different categories. Three of these categories were common categories. Alternately, the administrator respondents detailed five categories, only one of which was common: climate.

In terms of PBIS and the school’s climate improvement, 100% of the administrator respondents and 55.56% of the teacher respondents indicated on the PBIS Perception Survey a perception that PBIS was “helpful” whereas 37.04% of the teachers responded that it was “limited” for enhancing the school’s climate. Although, in their interviews, each teacher respondent implied assurance that PBIS could positively develop the school’s climate if the communication between adult members improved, every teacher was dedicated to fully participating in PBIS processes, and each faculty member consistently managed discipline issues.

Additionally, 66.67% of administrator respondents and 33.33% of the teacher respondents revealed on the PBIS Perception Survey they “strongly disagreed” there were more barriers that hindered the advancement of PBIS than factors that furthered its success. Furthermore 33.33% of administrator respondents “completely disagreed” with this statement. However, 59.26% of teacher respondents “strongly agreed”. These quantitative data were supported by the qualitative feedback. The teacher respondents mentioned a total of nine barriers whereas the administrators discussed five. Furthermore, the teacher respondents detailed three common categories, and the administrator

respondents discussed two. Only one of the five different common categories discussed between the teacher and administrator respondents (lack of teacher buy-in) was equivalent.

Lastly, on the PBIS Perception Survey, 66.67% of the administrator respondents and 62.96% of the teacher respondents signified they "strongly agreed" there were more factors that supported the success of PBIS than barriers that deterred its progress. Furthermore, 33.33% of the administrator respondents revealed they "completely agreed," but 29.63% of the teacher respondents "strongly disagreed" with this statement. Despite the fact the proportion of administrator and teacher respondents who responded favorably to this statement were comparable, 33% of the administrators and teachers responded with contradictory answers. Nonetheless, the qualitative results for both administrator and teacher respondents were more analogous to those who indicated they "strongly agreed" on the PBIS Perception Survey. The teacher respondents mentioned five categories, three of which were common categories, and the administrators discussed six categories, two of which were common categories. Both the teacher and administrator respondents indicated two equivalent common categories: administrative support and use of other schools as examples.

Discussion of Research Findings

As a result of the individual interviews, four themes which included teacher and administer knowledge of PBIS, potential benefits, implementation barriers, and factors that positively affected implementation were established based on teacher and administrator perspectives. Additionally, each theme was comprised of common categories which were the topics that were most frequently mentioned in the interviews.

Most of the researcher's findings in this study correlated with the findings from the literature thus making the data obtained from this study a significant exemplification of the literature.

Research Subquestion 1: What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS?

The first theme established from the teacher interviews was teacher understanding of PBIS which incorporated the common categories of positive behavior recognition, the understanding that PBIS was a slow process, the perception that PBIS was about changing adult mindsets, and inadequate or inaccurate understanding. In reference to positive behavior recognition, teacher respondents indicated positive reinforcement included both the presentation of a tangible item as well as verbal praise for appropriate behaviors. This category correlated with prior research as multiple researchers revealed an aspect of PBIS was the acknowledgement of appropriate behaviors through verbal adult praise in addition to the awarding of some type of tangible item (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015).

Teacher respondents also suggested the understanding that PBIS was a slow process. The teachers that encompassed this perception perceived the process had to move in a slow and deliberate manner to be successful. This finding was supported by research as Flannery et al. (2014) who found that high school implementation was a longer process than elementary and middle schools, and Flannery et al. (2013) who determined the process of implementing SWPBIS in high schools required two years to attain significant advancement.

A third category identified by teacher respondents in the theme of understanding of PBIS was the perception that PBIS was about changing adult mindsets. Respondents

imparted that an important function of PBIS was helping adults understand the worldview of the students they taught. Similarly, Flannery et al. (2014), Flannery et al. (2013), and Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) found the practice of changing how staff members perceived their roles was a substantial challenge because of staff members' often skewed view of their roles and overall school climate which was often the result of departmental affiliation or campus location. Additionally, multiple researchers affirmed one of the objectives of PBIS creators was the changing of school environments through the formation of improved systems and procedures that stimulated positive change in the actions of staff members, thus stimulating positive differences in the behavior of students and school climate (Bradshaw, Koth, et al., 2008; Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Carroll et al., 2012; Kelm et al., 2014).

The final category was inadequate or inaccurate understanding of PBIS. Several of the respondents indicated they either had a limited knowledge of PBIS or gave responses that were not accurate to the PBIS framework. This topic correlates to research in that not having a strong basic knowledge of PBIS meant the basic principles were not well comprehended which led to the formation of misconceptions and the suffering of implementation fidelity (Lohrmann, 2014).

Another theme signified by teacher respondents was potential benefits of PBIS. This theme was comprised of the common categories of character, relationship, and school climate improvements. Concerning character improvements, many teacher respondents specified the perception that PBIS could be used to teach students proper behavior and methods for making appropriate decisions. As indicated by the literature,

the teaching of appropriate behaviors was fundamental in boosting positive student behavior change (Bruhn et al., 2014; Fallon et al., 2014; Gietz & McIntosh, 2014).

A second common category denoted by teacher respondents as a potential benefit of PBIS was relationship improvements. The respondents identified both the enhancement of student and staff member relationships as well as staff member and parent relationships. The concept of improvements in staff and student relationships was supported by the literature as multiple researchers found that PBIS incorporated the promotion of positive interactions between both students and staff in the school. However, no prior research was found that specifically stated the use of PBIS helped improved staff member and parent relationships (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Coffey & Horner, 2012; Flannery et al., 2013; Freeman et al., 2015; Kelm et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2002)

The improvement of school climate was another aspect of the potential benefits of PBIS. School climate was the most mentioned category for this theme. Teachers signified that PBIS could beneficially change the school's climate by creating a positive spiral because much of what the students understood were negative results both in and outside of school. According to Bradshaw, Pas et al. (2015), one of the purposes of PBIS was the achievement of positive alterations in school climate. Additionally, Gietz and McIntosh (2014) found a statistically significant amount of students whose academic success was positively influenced by a positive perspective of their school environment.

A third theme identified by teacher respondents was implementation barriers which incorporated the common categories of lack of communication, inconsistency, and lack of buy-in. In reference to lack of communication, some teachers did not believe the

plan for PBIS had been disseminated appropriately to everyone in the school. Communication issues in the present study correlated with previous research studies as well. For instance, Bohanon et al. (2012), Flannery et al. (2014), and Flannery et al. (2013) found that excessive amounts of people in high schools made staff member communication difficult. Furthermore high school staff members usually had particular responsibilities and were sometimes reluctant to discuss school-related topics with other staff members (Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Fidelity of high school SWPBIS was achieved through systems that achieved fidelity (Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). Staff perceptions failed to change without such systems (Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the teachers denoted inconsistency in discipline practices as a barrier to PBIS implementation. Inconsistency was referenced both for administrators as well as other teachers in the school. In correlation with prior research, Flannery et al. (2014) and Flannery et al. (2013) discovered that excessive amounts of students and staff members in high schools often made consistency difficult.

The final common category associated with barriers to PBIS implementation was lack of staff buy-in. Several respondents signified the lack of buy-in was the result of staff members who did not believe PBIS would last in the school. Bohanon et al. (2012), Flannery et al. (2013), Flannery et al. (2014), and Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) also identified a lack of staff buy-in as a barrier to implementation. Furthermore, these researchers stated that in order to gain the buy-in from the majority of the stakeholders, high school staffs needed more professional learning in PBIS than elementary and middle school staffs and an increased focus on readiness preparedness and leadership distribution

(Bohanon et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

The final theme signified by teacher respondents was factors that positively affected PBIS implementation. The common categories that were mentioned most frequently were teacher support for PBIS, student buy-in, administrative support, and the use of other schools as examples. First, teacher support for PBIS was classified as a theoretical belief the system could work. In terms of this study, teacher support was categorized differently than teacher buy-in because not all of the teacher respondents who mentioned this category had fully bought into PBIS. No prior research was found that specifically stated the importance of teacher support in regards to the positive effects of PBIS implementation.

Student buy-in was another common category identified as a positive factor influencing PBIS. According to the respondents, a majority of the students had responded positively to the school's PBIS initiatives, especially those involving incentives. Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) identified the establishment of high school age-appropriate incentives and rewards as a potential impediment to implementation. Furthermore, Flannery et al. (2014) found that high school students preferred tangible items with a higher monetary value as opposed to simple acknowledgements which were preferred in elementary and middle school. However, many of the respondents revealed that school staff's distribution of suckers as an incentive was deemed highly desirable by the students.

Additionally, administrative support was another common category identified by the teachers. Regardless of their perceptions of how they thought the implementation of

PBIS had gone, the majority of the respondents perceived the administration as a whole supported PBIS in how they spoke of it as well as their actions. The importance of these findings correlate with those of Flannery et al. (2014) and Lohrmann et al. (2014) who discovered that both administration buy-in as well as how administrators speak and act in accordance with PBIS are critical to successful implementation.

The final common category associated with factors that positively affected PBIS implementation was the use of other schools as examples of successful PBIS implementation. This category was referred to by many of the respondents as a team of staff members from the study school visited another high school with similar demographics that was implementing PBIS successfully. Prior research supports this category as well. Bohanon et al. (2012) and Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) found the use of examples of change initiatives was associated with positive outcomes; however, the examples needed to be associated with a high school and contain demographics similar to that of the school initiating the change.

What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?

The first theme established from the administrator interviews was administrator understanding of PBIS which incorporated the common categories of teaching of appropriate student behaviors and positive behavior recognition. In reference to teaching appropriate behaviors, both respondents agreed the education of appropriate behaviors should be more of a focus than punishing inappropriate behaviors. In correlation with the literature, Bruhn et al. (2014), Fallon et al. (2014), and Gietz & McIntosh (2014) specified teaching student behavior skills was essential in creating positive student behavior change.

Administrator respondents also denoted positive behavior recognition as an aspect of their understanding of PBIS. Both administrators mentioned the distribution of tangible items as positive acknowledgement which correlated with the findings of multiple researchers who signified an aspect of PBIS was the recognition of appropriate behaviors through the presentation of some type of tangible item (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2012; Kelm et al., 2014; Nocera et al., 2014; O'Neill & Bundock, 2015). Additionally, one administrator indicated that this process helped staff members understand the majority of the students were not discipline problems. Even though there is no direct correlation with prior research, this statement does correlate with one of the objectives of PBIS which was the alteration of school environments through the formation of enhanced systems and protocols that encouraged positive changes in staff members (Bradshaw, Pas, et al., 2015; Kelm et al., 2014).

Another theme signified by teacher respondents was the potential benefits of PBIS. This theme was only comprised of one common category: school climate improvements. Both respondents referenced the actions of staff members who were trying to improve the school's climate. These findings correlated with research in that a rationale for PBIS was to establish positive changes in school climate (Bradshaw, Pas et al., 2015). Furthermore, Gietz and McIntosh (2014) discovered a statistically significant percentage of students whose academic success was positively affected by a positive view of their school's environment.

A third theme identified by administrator respondents was implementation barriers which incorporated the common categories of adult belief systems and

lack of buy-in. In reference to adult belief systems, both administrators referred to teachers who had firm beliefs in discipline that was contrary to PBIS practices. Research supports these findings as Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) found the elimination of staff preconceived notions of responsibilities was a barrier to implementation. Additionally, Flannery et al. (2014) and Flannery et al. (2013) determined that an assumption held by many high school staff members was that all students had been taught appropriate behavior and social skills before entering high school which led to a de-emphasis on the explicit teaching of appropriate behaviors.

Furthermore, the administrators denoted lack of staff buy-in as a barrier to PBIS implementation. Both respondents signified the lack of buy-in was the consequence of staff members who did not believe PBIS would remain in the school. Bohanon et al. (2012), Flannery et al. (2013), Flannery et al. (2014), and Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) also identified a lack of staff buy-in as a barrier to implementation. These researchers indicated that high school staffs needed increased professional learning in PBIS and an intensified focus on readiness preparedness and leadership distribution in order to achieve buy-in from the majority of the staff members (Bohanon et al., 2012; Flannery et al., 2014; Flannery et al., 2013; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015).

The final theme signified by administrator respondents was factors that positively affected PBIS implementation. The categories that were mentioned most frequently were administrative support and the use of other schools as examples. First, both participants conveyed their support of PBIS as well as the administration as a whole. The magnitude of these findings are supported by Flannery et al. (2014) and Lohrmann et al. (2014) who

found that the way administrators verbalize PBIS and act in accordance with PBIS are important to successful implementation.

The final common category related to factors that positively affected PBIS implementation was the use of other schools as examples of successful PBIS implementation. This category was mentioned by both respondents. A group of staff members from the study school visited another high school with similar demographics that was implementing PBIS successfully. Prior research supports the use of other schools as examples as well (Bohanon et al. 2012; Swain-Bradway et al., 2015). However, the examples needed to be related to a high school and have demographic compositions similar to that of the school instituting the change.

To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS?

The researcher did not locate any data in the literature that was relevant to this research question.

Relationship to Research

This research study examined the perspectives of high school teachers and administrators about SWPBIS. In chapter two, the researcher presented four studies that contained prior research about teacher and administrator feedback in regards to SWPBIS. Data from these four studies was compared with the results from the current study. Most of the results from the current study correlated with those of the four research studies. However, some of the results were dissimilar to the prior research.

Lohrmann et al. (2013) conducted a study on the perceptions of 18 middle school PBIS coaches, nine of whom were internal coaches and the other nine of whom were

external coaches. The purpose of the study was to examine difficulties with teacher and administrator buy-in of SWPBIS and examine how they were resolved. The coaches were interviewed to examine their observations and perceptions about teacher and administrator opposition to implementing SWPBIS and the plans used to solve and transform resistance. The researchers determined barriers to implementation included negative perceptions of SWPBIS, insufficient understanding of SWPBIS by school staff, and the pre-existence of low staff morale. Additionally, the researchers found strategies for resolving these problems included maintaining communication about the initiative, promoting staff involvement in the planning phases, formulating a positive staff climate, and increased administrative support.

One of the results from the current study compared to the results found by Lohrmann et al. (2013). This similarity was insufficient understanding of PBIS. Three of the teacher respondents indicated either a deficiency in knowledge of PBIS or an inaccurate understanding. As a result, these respondents' perceptions of SWPBIS were likely altered as a result. The other two barriers identified by Lohrmann et al. (2013) did not surface in the present study. First, Lohrmann et al. (2013) identified negative perceptions of SWPBIS as a barrier. The majority of teacher respondents in the current study expressed support for the concept of SWPBIS even though they had not fully bought in. Additionally, Lohrmann et al. (2013) discovered low staff morale was a barrier; however, low staff morale was not identified as a common category in the current study.

Flannery et al. (2014) conducted a study that consisted of 12 high schools, 6 of which were in one state in the Midwest and the other 6 were in one state in the Pacific

Northwest. Eight of the schools implemented SWPBIS and were considered treatment schools while 4 did not implement SWPBIS and were deemed control schools. The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of SWPBIS on student problem behaviors. Using a pre-test/post-test design, the researchers statistically analyzed the ODRs of each school over a 3-year period. Additionally, each school's SET score was used in the statistical model to compare the ODRs to the fidelity of implementation. Overall, the researchers found the schools that implemented SWPBIS with higher fidelity experienced larger decreases in ODRs. Furthermore, the researchers found that achieving staff and student buy-in and administrative support along with considering the developmental levels of students when determining incentives was important. Finally, the researchers determined that the implementation of SWPBIS in a high school setting took longer than most elementary and middle schools because of the unique structural barriers associated with most high schools.

Strong similarities were found between the current study and Flannery et al. (2014). Many of the teacher respondents and both of the administrator respondents recognized an absence of teacher buy-in as a major barrier to SWPBIS implementation. Conversely, most of the teacher respondents and both of the administrator respondents indicated the school's administration had bought into SWPBIS which Flannery et al. (2014) deemed as important. Finally, as this was the school's first year of SWPBIS implementation, it was not possible to compare the length of time to reach full implementation to any other schools; therefore, the results by Flannery et al. (2014) about high schools taking longer to reach full implementation could not be compared to the results of the current study.

Swain-Bradway et al., (2015) conducted a case study analysis of staff members from a combination of 8 high schools from the Midwest and Pacific Northwest. The purpose of the study was to examine the stages, problems, and strategies of high school SWPBIS implementation. Through the results, the researchers concluded barriers that hampered high school SWPBIS implementation were absences in teacher and administrator buy-in. Specifically, the teacher buy-in problems were associated with an unwillingness to teach social behaviors and participate in student acknowledgement systems. Alternately, the administrative buy-in was the result of a refusal to participate in SWPBIS practices and the principal's delegation of SWPBIS to an assistant principal.

Some similarities existed between the current study and the study conducted by Swain-Bradway et al. (2015). For example, Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) determined that the most troublesome barriers to SWPBIS implementation were teacher and administrator buy-in. However, Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) found the absence of teacher buy-in to be the result of an unwillingness to teach social behaviors and participate in student acknowledgements. Neither of these challenges presented themselves in this study. However, the aspect of teaching behaviors had not been implemented in the study school; therefore, it still had the potential to emerge as a hindrance to teacher buy-in. Alternately, the many teacher respondents and both administrator respondents indicated the study school's administration had fully bought into SWPIS; therefore, the results of the current study did not correlate with Swain-Bradway et al. (2015) in this area.

Flannery et al. (2013) conducted a study of eight total schools from the Pacific Northwest and Midwest. The purpose of the study was to examine the changes in high school SWPBIS fidelity over the course of the study. One of the main findings of this

study was the idea that school teams needed two years in order change implementation levels. Even without attempting to change fidelity levels, the researchers determined that high school implementation takes longer than other levels because of the structural barriers such as large populations of students and staff and staff departmentalization. Additionally, the researchers found that when schools used a "zero year" to build their SWPBIS framework and begin establishing buy-in, high schools were more fully prepared to achieve full implementation in the second year. Finally, the researchers determined that in order for buy-in to be achieved, strong lines of communication needed to be established to ensure all staff members are consistent with SWPBIS practices.

Most of the results from Flannery et al. (2013) compared to those of the current study. First, at the time of the current study, the study school was in their "zero year" which was intended to be used as a training year for the school's staff on SWPBIS processes and expectations as well as a time to identify and eliminate problems before the full implementation year. Even though buy-in had not been fully achieved, the school's administration and PBIS leadership team used the "zero year" to begin establishing buy-in along with the construction of the SWPBIS framework with the hopes of achieving full implementation in the second year. Furthermore, Flannery et al. (2013) found that strong communication amongst all staff members was necessary to achieve full buy-in. This concept correlated with the present study as deficiencies in communication were identified as a common category by teacher respondents as a barrier to SWPBIS implementation in the study school and were found to hinder teacher buy-in.

Conclusions

This research study was linked to one research question: What are high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Furthermore, the study was directed by three research subquestions.

Research subquestion one: What are high school teachers' perceptions of SWPBIS? The majority of the teacher participants supported the concept of SWPBIS. This support was based on their recognition that students in the school had social skill deficiencies and the perception that SWPBIS processes could help improve the school's climate. Furthermore, awareness that the school's administration not only supported but also led the implementation of SWPBIS as well as the knowledge of another high school with similar demographics that utilized SWPBIS successfully bolstered the teacher participants' support of SWPBIS in the study school.

Even though the teacher respondents' supported SWPBIS, not all of them fully bought-in to the processes in the study school. Reasons for the lack of buy-in included limited or inaccurate understandings of the SWPBIS framework and the perception that both administrators and teachers failed to be consistent in discipline processes. As a result, some teachers did not believe the use SWPBIS would continue in their school much longer. However, based on the teacher participants' support of SWPBIS, the researcher concluded that a communication gap existed between the administrators and teachers who were responsible for SWPBIS implementation and the rest of the school staff which resulted in misunderstandings. As a result of these misinterpretations, many teachers failed to buy-in to SWPBIS as a whole.

Conclusions were also derived on research subquestion two: What are high school administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Overall the administrator participants had a consistent understanding of SWPBIS and favorable perspectives of its success in the study school. For example both participants not only mentioned the positive acknowledgement aspect, but also the feature of teaching social skills. Furthermore, in regards to the implementation process, neither administrator mentioned any negative examples and believed the use of another high school that successfully implemented SWPBIS was helpful in developing the study school's framework. Finally, both administrators revealed that lack of teacher buy-in was a barrier to successfully implementing SWPBIS in the study school. This perception was based on the difficulty of some teachers in the school to change their belief systems about student discipline.

Conclusions were also formed on research subquestion three: To what extent is there a difference between high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS? Both teachers and administrators supported the concept of SWPBIS in that they perceived the use of PBIS was needed to support the social skill deficits of the study school's students as well as to improve the school's climate. Additionally, both administrators and teachers recognized that the administration was supportive of SWPBIS, and the use of other schools that effectively implemented SWPBIS were encouraging for the potential success of SWPBIS in the study school. However, unlike the administrators, the teachers as a whole, where not fully bought into SWPBIS in the study school. The researcher concluded that some of the deficiencies in teacher buy-in resulted in a communication gap between the administrators and teachers on the school's PBIS team and the rest of the teaching staff. Whereas the administrators believed the lack

of buy-in was solely a result of those teachers who were unwilling to waver in their beliefs about student discipline, based on the teacher perceptions, the researcher surmised that most of the teacher participants were willing to buy-in to SWPBIS if they were better informed about what it entailed as well as the administration's vision for it. Even so, many of the teachers and both of the administrators identified the need for teachers to change their mindsets in regards to student discipline as an important factor in the progression of SWPBIS.

Overall, the introduction of SWPBIS in the study school was the beginning of a change process for the school's staff. Not only were staff members required to change methods and procedures, but they were also asked to alter their views on student discipline. As a result, the concept of change created an additional barrier to the implementation process because many of the teachers were either unwilling to change or did not understand the purpose for the changes.

Research Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was constructed with the objective of attaining a comprehension of high school teachers' and administrators' perceptions of SWPBIS and the variations in the perceptions between the two roles (see Figure 1). The researcher hypothesized that despite the differences in positions, the views would be similar because of the mutual experiences of working in the same school. However, based on the results of the study, the researcher found that even though individuals in each position worked in the same school, their responsibilities and interactions were different, which in turn, created different perspectives (see Figure 2).

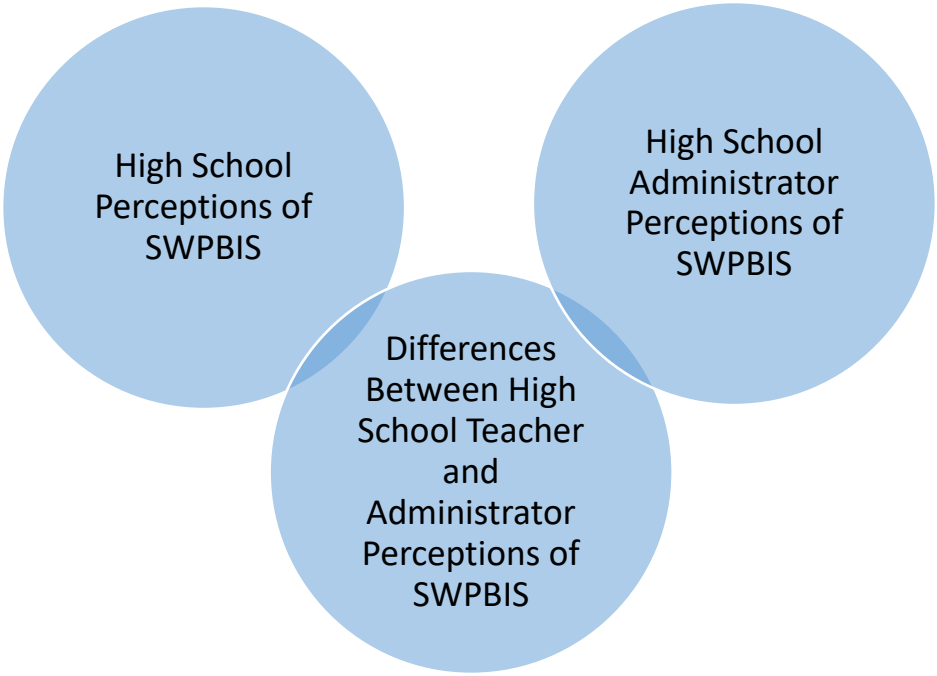

Figure 2. Research framework of the study of perceptions of school-based positive behavior interventions and supports (SWPBIS).

Implications

SWPBIS is intended to be an instrument to help schools improve both social and academic outcomes along with the overall school climate. However, due to barriers specific to high school settings, many educators are uncertain about the effectiveness of high school implementation. Therefore, one implication from the current study is that to achieve teacher buy-in of SWPBIS, high school teachers need to understand the administration's vision for implementation. Additionally, all areas of change need to be addressed before beginning the implementation process. A second implication is that despite full implementation and full staff buy-in, the facilitation of SWPBIS in high school settings can have some positive effects on school climate.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made to provide educators responsible for the implementation of SWPBIS in a high school setting methods to improve the process.

1. SWPBIS training needs to be conducted with entire high school faculties in a manner that thoroughly describes what the framework entails as well as eliminating common misconceptions about what it is not.
2. As part of the school faculty introduction of SWPBIS, the administration should provide the reasons and vision for the implementation.
3. Once the SWPBIS framework is established, the administration should thoroughly explain the expectations for the school faculty.
4. The school faculty should be updated regularly on the installation of SWPBIS features as well as surveyed on their perceptions of the implementation process.
5. The small successes relative to SWPBIS should be celebrated regularly to demonstrate its effectiveness as well as sustain and encourage buy-in.
6. The use of other high performing SWPBIS high schools should be used early in the implementation process to give the implementing school PBIS teams excellent examples to model their own frameworks.
7. Follow up training should be conducted at the end of the first year to ensure fidelity of implementation.
8. All areas of change should be addressed with school staffs before beginning the implementation of SWPBIS.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. Due to a lack of qualitative research on high school SWPBIS, similar studies on SWPBIS should be conducted in high schools with varying demographics.
2. Longitudinal studies of three and five years should be conducted in the study school to determine if teacher and administrator perceptions have changed over time.
3. Similar studies should be conducted in high schools across Georgia and the United States to determine if the results of this study are indicative of other high schools.

Dissemination

Due to the different personalities and beliefs of high school administrators and teachers, the future success of SWPBIS in high schools is uncertain. In order for SWPBIS to be successful in any school, the administration has to believe it will succeed as well as undertake specific actions to ensure the success of the system. To assist with administrator buy-in and implementation fidelity, the researcher plans to present the findings of this study to the principal of the study school as well as the superintendent of the school system in which the study took place. The researcher will also request to present the results of this study at a high principals' meeting in the school system in which the study took place. Finally, the researcher will submit a proposal to present the results of this study at the annual Georgia Association of Positive Behavior Supports.

Concluding Thoughts

The participants from this study, which included high school administrators and teachers provided insight on high school teacher and administrator perspectives of

SWPBIS. The teacher participants indicated support for the concept of SWPBIS, but at the time of the study, they had not bought into the implementation in the study school. One of the reasons for the lack of buy-in was a result of an absence of communication between the school's administration and PBIS leadership team and the rest of the teaching staff. Even though the administration had bought into SWPBIS and understood its potential benefits, their vision had not been communicated to many of the teachers.

Additionally, the implementation of SWPBIS was a major change initiative for the school's staff. However, the school's leadership did not fully address all of the areas of change before beginning the implementation process. For instance, teacher feedback was not acquired before the decision was made to implement SWPBIS nor was any professional learning provided on SWPBIS. Instead, the school's administration made the decision based on their own perspectives, and the school's faculty was told they were implementing SWPBIS at the beginning of the school year. This approach consequently facilitated a lack of teacher ownership and thus a lack of buy-in for the system. As a result, many of the teachers viewed the implementation of SWPBIS like many other public education initiatives: a program that would not last.

Despite the lack of buy-in within the study school, many of the participants also revealed positive factors. For instance, the students were supportive of the SWPBIS initiatives, the school's climate showed improvements, and more emphasis was placed on positive staff member and student relationships.

As a former high school teacher and administrator and current PBIS district coordinator, the researcher understands both the academic and behavioral challenges high school students face. Additionally, the researcher is aware of the barriers associated with

implementing SWPBIS in a high school. Nonetheless, the researcher firmly believes that SWPBIS is a system that can be used to produce positive benefits for students, staff members, and schools as a whole.

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APPENDIX A: STUDIES ON SWPBIS AND REDUCTIONS IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

Table A1

Studies on School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) and Reductions in Elementary and Middle School Discipline Problems

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
		Elementary school		
Bradshaw, C. P., Waasdorp, T. E., & Leaf, P. J. (2012). Effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports on child behavior problems. *Pediatrics*, *130*, 1136–1145.	To determine effects of SWPBIS on student behaviors	12,334 students in 37 elementary schools	Quantitative: multilevel analysis on teacher ratings of student problem behaviors; 3-year study	Tier 1 results were highest for students who received supports beginning in kindergarten. Younger children were more adaptable to Tier 1 supports.
Bradshaw, C. P., Waasdorp, T., & Leaf, P. J. (2015). Examining the effects of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports on student outcomes: Results from a randomized controlled effectiveness trial in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, *12*, 546–557.	To determine impact of SWPBIS based on baseline behavior risk	12,334 students in 37 Maryland elementary schools: 21 intervention schools, 16 control schools	Quantitative: latent profile analysis to assess Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaptation Checklist scores for baseline risks Standard means across latent classes were compared 3-year study	Students who had the highest behavior risks and attended SWPBIS schools had significantly fewer office discipline referrals (ODRs) when compared to similar students in non-SWPBIS schools. No significant effect on suspensions was found between the treatment and comparison schools.
Waasdorp, T. E., Bradshaw, C. P., & Leaf, P. J. (2012). The impact of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports on bullying and peer rejection. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, *166*, 149–156.	37 Maryland elementary schools	To determine the effects of SWPBIS on bullying and peer rejection	Quantitative: hierarchical linear model	Students in higher grades displayed less bullying and rejection behaviors in comparison to students in non-SWPBIS schools regardless of demographics. Earlier exposure to SWPBIS correlated with more positive behavioral gains

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
		Elementary and Middle School		
Guillory, S. (2015). *The effects of positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) Tier 1 on student behavior: A case study* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 10008842)	Evaluation of PBIS as an alternative for behavior improvement	1 urban public pre-kindergarten through Grade 8 school	Quantitative: descriptive analysis of ODRs, suspensions, and reading test scores; comparison pre- to postimplementation Qualitative: interviews over student discipline & academic performance during implementation 3 year study	Decreases in out-of-school suspensions (OSS) for first 2 years; decreases in in-school suspensions all 3 years. Students exposed to SWPBIS for all 3 years showed the greatest improvements. Students who were exposed to SWPBIS showed improvements in reading scores. OSS rates increased 111.7% in Year 3 of the study.
Kelm, J. L., McIntosh, K., & Cooley, S. (2014). Effects of implementing school-wide positive behavioural interventions and supports on problem behaviour and academic achievement in a Canadian elementary school. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, *29*, 195–212.	To determine if higher implementation fidelity led to increased positive outcomes	1 small elementary/ middle school in British Columbia, Canada	Quantitative: changes in behavioral and academic outcomes; student perception surveys Qualitative: interviews on teacher perceptions of PBIS 2-year study	Decreases in ODRs over 2 years; increased achievement for fourth graders; decreased achievement for seventh graders. Fidelity of implementation related to improvements. Positive perception data correlated with fidelity of implementation.
Simonsen, B., Eber, L., Black, A. C., Sugai, G., Lewandowski, H., Sims, B., & Myers, D. (2012). Illinois statewide positive behavioral interventions and supports: Evolution and impact on student outcomes across years. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, *14*, 5–16.	To evaluate the development of SWPBIS implemen-tation in schools that implemented with and without fidelity	428 schools: 274 elementary, 46 kindergarten through Grade 8, 91 middle, 17 high schools	Quantitative: hierarchical linear model	All schools' ODRs decreased. Schools with high fidelity had higher ODR decreases than those with low fidelity. Students showed improvements in standardized reading scores regardless of schools' levels of implementation fidelity

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Vincent, C. G., & Tobin, T. J. (2011). The relationship between implementation of school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBIS) and disciplinary exclusion of students from various ethnic backgrounds with and without disabilities. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *19*, 217–232.	To examine exclusionary discipline patterns in schools implementing SWPBIS	77 schools: 38 elementary, 23 middle schools, 7 high schools, 4 kindergarten through Grade 8 or Grade 12 schools, 5 alternative schools	Quantitative: linear multiple regression analysis	Classrooms with stronger SWPBIS characteristics had lower OSS rates for elementary schools; nonclassroom settings for high schools. SWPBIS did not affect disproportionality among African American students in comparison to all other races. OSS rates in both the elementary and middle schools showed very little change. The distribution of exclusionary discipline rates among ethnic-minority students in elementary and middle schools had very little change.
Nocera, E. J., Whitbread, K. M., & Nocera, G. P. (2014). Impact of school-wide positive behavior supports on student behavior in the middle grades. *Research in Middle Level Education*, *37*(8), 1–14.	To determine if implementation of SWPBIS results in improved academic and behavioral outcomes	Middle school 1 middle school; 50% free and reduced-price lunch; 40% ethnic minority	Quantitative: *t* test compared ODRs, suspensions, climate surveys in study year to baseline year Qualitative: teacher and administrator interviews	ODR decreases of 40% over 2 years. SWPBIS correlated with impact on the top 8 discipline infractions. Large reductions in ODRs among ethnic-minority students although still disproportionate compared to White students.

Table A2 *Studies on School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) and Reductions in High School Discipline Problems*

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Bohanon, H., Fenning, P., Hicks, K., Weber, S., Thier, K., Akins, B., . . . McArdle, L. (2012). A case example of the implementation of schoolwide positive behavior support in a high school setting using change point test analysis. *Preventing School Failure*, *56*, 91–103.	To provide descriptive data about SWPBIS planning, implementation, and outcomes in a high school setting	Staff and students in a large Midwestern metropolitan high school	Quantitative: descriptive statistics: Self-Assessment Survey & School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET)	Levels of PBIS implementation status increased over time. SET scores increased each year and both teaching of behavior and overall scores were 80% and 94% (80%= passing) after the final year of the study. ODRs decreased 53% over 3 consecutive school years. Two significant change point tests were identified for March 2007 and March 2008 (occurred after PBIS booster sessions).
Bohanon, H., & Wu, M.-J. (2014). Developing buy-in for positive behavior support in secondary settings. *Preventing School Failure*, *58*, 223–229.	To determine whether schools that addressed the phases of exploration, installation, and implementation, in comparison to schools that did not address these phases, (a) had higher SWPBIS fidelity and (b) had fewer ODRs.	4 Midwestern high schools implementing SWPBIS	Quantitative: descriptive statistics: SET Quantitative: change point test: ODRs	SET scores increased by an average of 10 points for treatment schools over the 2 school years of the study and decreased by an average of 20 points for comparison schools. ODRs decreased by a mean of 39% in treatment schools over the 2 school years of the study and increased by a mean of 10% in comparison schools.

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Flannery, K. B., Fenning, P., Kato, M. M., & McIntosh, K. (2014). Effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports and fidelity of implementation on problem behavior in high schools. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *29*, 111–124.	To examine the effects of SWPBIS on the levels of discipline infractions	36,653 students in 12 high schools in the Pacific Northwest and Midwest	Quantitative: multilevel latent growth model	Statistically significant decreases found in problem behaviors over the duration of the study in comparison to the control schools, which showed increased problematic behaviors. The degree of reduction was significantly related to SWPBIS features. Schools with higher fidelity scores as measured by the SET had higher ODR reductions.
Tyre, A., Feuerborn, L., & Pierce, J. (2011). Schoolwide intervention to reduce chronic tardiness at the middle and high school levels. *Preventing School Failure*, *55*, 132–139.	To determine the effect of SWPBIS on tardiness	Combined middle/high school (Grades 7-12) with 355 students in Washington operated by the Bureau of Indian Education	Quantitative: pre- versus post-implementation comparison of tardies	Tardies decreased 67% from pre- to postimplementation. Decreases corresponded with high SWPBIS implementation fidelity.

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Vincent, C. G., & Tobin, T. J. (2011). The relationship between implementation of school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBIS) and disciplinary exclusion of students from various ethnic backgrounds with and without disabilities. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *19*, 217–232.	77 schools: 38 elementary, 23 middle schools, 7 high schools, 4 kindergarten through Grade 8 or Grade 12 schools, 5 alternative schools	To examine exclusionary discipline patterns in schools implementing SWPBIS	Quantitative: linear multiple regression analysis	Classrooms with stronger SWPBIS characteristics had lower OSS rates for elementary schools; nonclassroom settings for high schools. SWPBIS did not affect disproportionality among African American students in comparison to all other races. OSS rates in both the elementary and middle schools showed very little change. The distribution of exclusionary discipline rates among ethnic-minority students in elementary and middle schools had very little change.

APPENDIX B: STUDIES ON NEGATIVE OUTCOMES OF SWPBIS

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Bradshaw, C. P., Waasdorp, T., & Leaf, P. J. (2015). Examining the effects of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports on student outcomes: Results from a randomized controlled effectiveness trial in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, *12*, 546–557.	To determine impact of SWPBIS based on baseline behavior risk	12,334 students in 37 Maryland elementary schools: 21 intervention schools, 16 control schools	Quantitative: latent profile analysis to assess Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaptation Checklist scores for baseline risks Standard means across latent classes were compared 3-year study	Students who had the highest behavior risks and attended SWPBIS schools had significantly fewer office discipline referrals (ODRs) when compared to similar students in non-SWPBIS schools. No significant effect on suspensions was found between the treatment and comparison schools.
Gage, N. A., Sugai, G., & Lewis, T. J. (2013, March). *Academic achievement and school-wide positive interventions and supports*. Paper presented at the Society of Educational Effectiveness Spring Conference, Washington, DC.	To understand the impact of SWPBIS on academics	150 schools (all levels) in Connecticut that implemented SWPBIS	Quasi-experimental; quantitative: correlation between SWPBIS, school characteristics, and academic achievement	Sixth-grade math was the only subject that was found to have a significant correlation between SWPBIS and academic achievement
Guillory, S. (2015). *The effects of positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) Tier 1 on student behavior: A case study* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. (UMI No. 10008842)	Evaluation of PBIS as an alternative for behavior improvement	1 urban public pre-kindergarten through Grade 8 school	Quantitative: descriptive analysis of ODRs, suspensions, and reading test scores; comparison pre- to postimplementation Qualitative: interviews over student discipline & academic performance during implementation 3 year study	Decreases in out-of-school suspensions (OSS) for first 2 years; decreases in in-school suspensions all 3 years. Students exposed to SWPBIS for all 3 years showed the greatest improvements. Students who were exposed to SWPBIS showed improvements in reading scores. OSS rates increased 111.7% in Year 3 of the study.

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/analysis	Outcomes
Simonsen, B., Eber, L., Black, A. C., Sugai, G., Lewandowski, H., Sims, B., & Myers, D. (2012). Illinois statewide positive behavioral interventions and supports: Evolution and impact on student outcomes across years. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, *14*, 5–16.	428 schools: 274 elementary, 46 kindergarten through Grade 8, 91 middle, 17 high schools	To evaluate the development of SWPBIS implementation in schools that implemented with and without fidelity	Quantitative: hierarchical linear model	All schools' ODRs decreased. Schools with high fidelity had higher ODR decreases than those with low fidelity. Students showed improvements in standardized reading scores regardless of schools' levels of implementation fidelity
Vincent, C. G., & Tobin, T. J. (2011). The relationship between implementation of school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBIS) and disciplinary exclusion of students from various ethnic backgrounds with and without disabilities. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *19*, 217–232.	77 schools: 38 elementary, 23 middle schools, 7 high schools, 4 kindergarten through Grade 8 or Grade 12 schools, 5 alternative schools	To examine exclusionary discipline patterns in schools implementing SWPBIS	Quantitative: linear multiple regression analysis	Classrooms with stronger SWPBIS characteristics had lower OSS rates for elementary schools; nonclassroom settings for high schools. SWPBIS did not affect disproportionality among African American students in comparison to all other races. OSS rates in both the elementary and middle schools showed very little change. The distribution of exclusionary discipline rates among ethnic-minority students in elementary and middle schools had very little change.

APPENDIX C: PBIS PERCEPTION SURVEY

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Joseph Dean, a student in the Counseling, Foundations, and Leadership Department at Columbus State University. Dr. Robert Waller is supervising the research study.

I. Purpose:
The purpose of this study is to examine high school teacher and administrator perceptions of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS).

II. Procedures:
The researcher will obtain a consent form from all participants who agree to participate in a survey. Participants will not be identified and survey responses will be kept confidential. The researcher will send a link to you to take the survey. You will have to give consent to participate in the survey in the first question.

III. Possible Risks or Discomforts:
There are no possible risks involved in this research study. The researcher will minimize discomfort by assuring anonymity and confidentiality to the participant. Participants may feel discomfort in answering some of the survey questions for fear of their employer knowing their thoughts and perceptions. Survey responses will be kept confidential by the researcher.

IV. Potential Benefits:
The participant may be benefited through the research study. The research study results will be important for the community of educators who are teachers and administrators by providing data to further understand teacher perceptions about PBIS. Additionally, the study results will inform educational leaders about the perceptions of teachers and administrators about PBIS. The research could potentially benefit educational leaders by helping them with information about the implementation processes.

V. Costs and Compensation:
There will be no cost or compensation for participants in this research study.

VI. Confidentiality:
All data will be password protected and responses will not be linked to the participants.

VII. Withdrawal:
Participation in this research study is voluntary. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time, and withdrawal will not involve penalty or loss of benefits.

For additional information about this research project, you may contact Joseph Dean at [phone] or [e-mail]. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Columbus State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at irb@columbusstate.edu.

1. Do you agree to the above terms? By clicking Yes, you consent that you are willing to answer the questions in this survey.
   Yes No

2. What is your knowledge level of PBIS?
   None Limited Proficient Expert

3. How would you rate the importance of PBIS in relation to improving your school climate?
   Waste of Time Limited Helpful Exceptional

4. There are more barriers that prevent the success of PBIS than components that promote its success.
   Completely Disagree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Completely Disagree

5. I understand the reasons for PBIS implementation.
   Completely Disagree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Completely Disagree

6. How would you rate your perception of the potential benefits of PBIS?
   Waste of Time Limited Helpful Exceptional

7. There are more elements that promote the success of PBIS than obstacles that hinder its progress.
   Completely Disagree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Completely Disagree

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL QUESTIONS

1. Please explain what you know about PBIS.

2. Please explain the importance of PBIS in regards to your school climate.

3. What barriers do you see hindering the success of PBIS in your school?

4. What was the purpose(s) for implementing PBIS in your school?

5. Please describe how you see PBIS benefiting your school.

6. What do you see as factors that positively affect PBIS?

7. What recommendations would you make for improving implementation?