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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS

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CASP Position Paper:
School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SW-PBIS):
A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for Student Wellness
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California's Need for Multi-Tiered System of Supports that include School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports.

In many districts, local policies have approached safety and mental health in schools with ad hoc and piecemeal approaches. This is borne out by the very narrow federal and state laws related to student suspension and expulsion that produced reactive discipline policies and increased student exclusion from school. Such practices have resulted in disproportionality in discipline practices, as reflected in the high number of suspensions and expulsions of African American and Latino students in California. In CASP's view, in order to ensure that all students flourish academically, districts must establish equitable discipline practices and behavioral interventions that promote positive social-emotional development and that prevent and respond to negative behaviors in order to re-engage disconnected students. School psychologists play a critical role in implementing school-based educationally related counseling services and positive behavior systems and supports that create and reinforce positive school cultures of achievement for all students, including those at risk of academic failure.

Recently, CASP took a position to support AB 97 to ensure that new Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) monies are directed for the purposes outlined in Section 42238.07. This section states that the regulations shall require a school district "to increase or improve services for unduplicated pupils." Research shows that efforts to improve school climate, safety and learning are not separate endeavors. They must be designed, funded and implemented as a comprehensive school-wide approach. CASP seeks to ensure that districts strongly consider in their local LCFF plans that students have access to multi-tiered systems of support for universal, targeted, and individualized psychological, behavioral, and counseling services and supports that will increase their chances for academic improvement and mental wellness.

A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a school- and community-based continuum of care that provides expertise and services to students to meet their academic, behavioral, social-emotional and mental health needs. "The MTSS framework encompasses prevention and wellness promotion, universal screening for academic and behavioral barriers to learning, implementing evidence-based interventions that increase in intensity as needed, monitoring the ongoing progress of students in response to implemented interventions, and engaging in systematic decision making about programming and services needed for students based upon specific student outcome data" (Villancourt, Cowen, & Skalski, 2013). School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SW-PBIS) is one example of an evidence-based multi-tiered system of support in which students have access to a wide range of behavioral and mental health interventions by highly trained school-based personnel (Villancourt, et al., 2013). SW-PBIS is a multi-tiered framework for creating positive school cultures. SW-PBIS is not a program or a curriculum; it is a decision-making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important outcomes for all students (www.pbis.org). At the universal, school-wide level, PBIS requires the implementation of preventative and proactive approaches to discipline and positive discipline methods. In doing so, PBIS changes the belief systems and behavior of school staffs, students, and the community, resulting in positive, productive citizens and safer schools.

School-Wide PBIS Fosters Local Control for School Climate, Academics, and Behavior.
"Improving student academic and behavior outcomes is about ensuring all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions possible" (www.pbis.org). School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SW-PBIS) provides an operational framework and a set of sustainable school-wide practices for achieving positive academic and behavioral outcomes. The school-wide practices are research-based, but are developed and implemented by the local school team of teachers, parents, administrators, school psychologists, school counselors, and students to reflect the culture and values of their site.

SW-PBIS Has National Support.
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was defined, described, and researched since its introduction in the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (Sugai and Simonsen, 2012). SW-PBIS (known nationally as SWPBS) research and training receives ongoing support from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), US Department of Education, through the OSEP Technical Assistance Center. The OSEP center offers schools capacity-building information and technical assistance for identifying, adapting, and sustaining effective school-wide positive disciplinary practices. Oregon, Kansas, Connecticut and Texas pioneered and have sustained SW-PBIS systems since the 1980s. School psychologists in California have also been leaders in SW-PBIS professional development and systems implementation in schools and districts throughout the state.

Moreover, PBIS is aligned with state and national frameworks such as Response to Intervention (RtI) and an Integrated Systems Framework (ISF) for connecting school-based educationally related counseling services and PBIS (Barrett & Eber, & Weist, 2013).
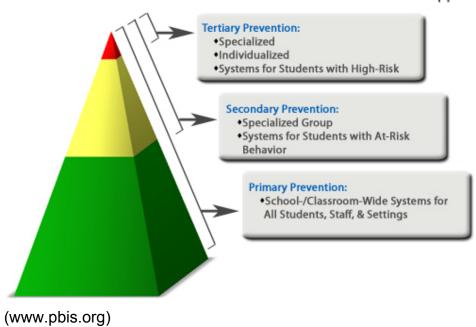
A Continuum of SW-PBIS Practices.
SW-PBIS emphasizes four integrated elements: (a) <u>data</u> for decision making, (b) measurable <u>outcomes</u> supported and evaluated by data, (c) <u>practices</u> with evidence that these outcomes are achievable, and (d) <u>systems</u> that efficiently and effectively support implementation of these practices (www.pbis.org). These four elements are guided by six core principles:

- Develop a continuum of scientifically based behavior and academic interventions and supports
- Use data to make decisions and solve problems
- Arrange the environment to prevent the development and occurrence of problem behavior; increase supervision and supports where needed
- *All* school staff teach and encourage pro-social skills and behaviors in all settings on campus, and before and after school
- Implement evidence-based behavioral practices with fidelity and accountability
- Screen universally and monitor student performance and progress continuously

Schools that implement SW-PBIS organize their evidence-based behavioral practices and systems into an integrated continuum in which students experience supports based on their behavioral responsiveness to intervention. A three-tiered prevention logic model requires that **all students** receive training and support at the universal or primary tier. If the behavior of some students is not responsive as expected, more intensive behavioral supports are provided in the form of a group contingency (selected or secondary tier) or a highly individualized plan (intensive or tertiary tier).

Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support

Tertiary Prevention:
- Specialized
- Individualized
- Systems for Students with High-Risk

Secondary Prevention:
- Specialized Group
- Systems for Students with At-Risk Behavior

Primary Prevention:
- School-/Classroom-Wide Systems for All Students, Staff, & Settings

(www.pbis.org)

Documented Positive Outcomes.
Schools that have established and maintained School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support systems with integrity have teaching and learning environments that:

- Are less reactive, aversive, punitive, dangerous and exclusionary
- Are more engaging, responsive, preventive, productive, and participatory
- Address classroom management and disciplinary issues (attendance, tardies, cooperation, participation, meeting positive expectations); *all* staff model and teach expected behaviors
- Improve supports for students whose behavior requires more specialized or intensive assistance (e.g. emotional and behavioral disorders, mental health issues)
- Maximize academic engagement and achievement for all students

Conclusion.
School psychologists can be effective advocates for SW-PBIS systems in their counties, districts, and schools. Knowing and articulating the benefits of SW-PBIS are the first steps toward implementation.

SW-PBIS can support important Local Control and Accountability Plan priority areas by providing local schools and districts with an evidence-based framework to produce targeted student behavioral and academic outcomes. SW-PBIS provides an operational framework for achieving these outcomes.

CASP encourages the California Department of Education, school psychologists, and local school districts to adopt and implement School-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support as an evidence-based prevention and intervention framework to promote academic and social/behavioral success for all students. Free and low-cost resources, training, and consultation are available. To this end, LCFF funding can be used to implement SW-PBIS:

- Professional development
- Technical support
- Data collection and evaluation
- Materials and resources
- Phases of implementation
- Coordination
- Sustainability

Resources.
PBIS Champion Model-Fresno County. This system is a framework for creating a comprehensive systems approach for the design and delivery of PBIS in California.This action-oriented framework provides *quality criteria* and *how to steps* for developing, implementing, monitoring, and sustaining each level of the system; Bronze (Tier 1), Silver (Tier 2), and Gold (Tier 3). Each tier in the system includes three categories: Category 1 - Elements, Category 2 - School-Wide Characteristics, and Category 3 - Behavior and Academic Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Each category is

comprised of quality criteria and a set of defined actions. Contact Information for the researcher and developer of the PBIS Champion Model System: Jessica Djabrayan, Ed.D. (559) 273-7747

California Technical Center on PBIS.
http://www.pbis.org/links/pbis_network/california.aspx

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