Positive Impact of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) on Regular Attendance in Grades K-4

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Dedication

I am dedicating this Doctoral Capstone Project to my family, friends, and colleagues whose unwavering support and love have helped to guide me throughout this journey. Your belief in me has been the cornerstone of my success, and I am endlessly grateful for your patience, compassion, and inspiration.

To my wife, Mary Kate, whose patience I have tested countless times during this journey. You have been a constant source of encouragement and understanding for me. To my son, Jack, you are the source of my joy and my greatest motivator. Mary Kate and Jack, this accomplishment is as much yours as it is mine, and I dedicate it to you with all of my love and gratitude.

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Abstract

The Wyoming Valley West School District has identified regular attendance as a priority issue. Absenteeism has been an issue for many school districts over the years, but there seems to be a decrease in the regular attendance of students' post-pandemic. Dana Elementary showed that 30.2% of students being identified as being chronically absent and State Street Elementary showed 49.5% of students being chronically absent in the 2021-2022 school year, as reported through the PA Future Ready Index. Literature defines school climate as one of the contributing factors to absenteeism. This research is needed to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS will positively affect regular student attendance. Through a mixed-methods approach, the researcher aimed to understand the impact of PBIS programs on student attendance, school, climate, and disciplinary incidents. The goal is to provide insights that can inform school administrators and policymakers on how to utilize PBIS strategies to improve attendance, create a positive school climate, and reduce disciplinary referrals leading to out-of-school suspensions.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

In the realm of school administration, the importance of addressing attendance and implementing Positive Behaviors Intervention and Supports (PBIS) stood out as a significant focus. Initially, the connection between these two areas was not apparent, but upon examination the alignment of PBIS with the goal of improving regular attendance in elementary schools became evident. The ongoing challenge of absenteeism, further intensified by the post COVID-19 pandemic era, has raised questions about how creating a positive school climate through PBIS can positively impact student attendance.

The Wyoming Valley West School District, recognizing regular attendance as a priority issue, looked to explore the potential of PBIS in addressing this concern. This research looked to investigate the relationship between PBIS and student attendance, with a focus on chronic absenteeism. It delved into the underlying reasons for absenteeism, particularly in the post-pandemic context, while also considering the historical perspective of attendance in the school setting.

Background

As a school administrator two of the areas where a lot of my time and effort were focused were on attendance and implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in my school. While first learning and developing a PBIS program I did not see how these two could be connected. When reflecting on the district wide comprehensive plan and discussing potential areas of research with my Assistant Superintendent, we thought a good area of study would be PBIS and attendance. We had PBIS programs in one elementary school and the middle school, and I was tasked with implementing the

program in two other elementary schools. The implementation of these programs aligned with the district's measurable goal of improving regular attendance in elementary schools.

The project is worthy for my research as improved attendance is important to academic achievement and incorporating the PBIS program will help create a positive school culture that will foster students' consistent school attendance. PBIS is a program that has a lot of history and success. While extensive research exists on PBIS, there is comparatively less focus on its connection to improved attendance. The research I conduct will be used by the assistant superintendent to determine if there is enough evidence that the district is meeting its comprehensive plan's goals.

Capstone Focus

The identified problem that I want to research and address is the regular attendance of elementary school students. The Wyoming Valley West School District has identified regular attendance as a priority issue. Absenteeism has been an issue for many school districts over the years, but there has been a decrease in the regular attendance of students following the COVID-19 pandemic. Literature defines school climate as one of the contributing factors to absenteeism. This research is needed to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS will positively affect regular student attendance.

The areas of research that need to be reviewed in the concentration of attendance would be reasons for absenteeism and chronic absenteeism. There is also a need to look at absenteeism in the post-pandemic years and a look at the history of attendance in the school setting.

The other area that will be reviewed in detail is School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS). There will be detailed reviews of the history, development, and implementations of SWPBIS. There will also be information on PBIS effects on student behaviors, school, climate, and achievement. There will also be a look into teachers' perceptions of the use of PBIS.

Research Method

My plan is to use mixed methods research for my action research plan. I chose this methodology to use quantitative and qualitative data to best answer my research questions. It is my intent to use collect quantitative data regarding attendance (excused, unexcused, Out of School Suspensions) from the elementary buildings, using both the 2022-23 school year and the 2023-24 school year data (previous school years if necessary) and office discipline referral (ODR) data. I used survey data from teachers (surveys) and use data from the PBIS School Climate Survey for School Personnel and the PBIS School-wide Evaluation Tool. Using the qualitative data will help support and elaborate the effect of a PBIS program on attendance data.

Research Questions

Research Question #1: Does a School-wide PBIS program help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

Research Question #2: Does creating a positive school climate help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

Research Question #3: Does PBIS help decrease office disciple referrals resulting in out-of-school suspensions?

Expected Outcomes

My plan is to use mixed methods research for my action research plan. I chose this methodology to use quantitative and qualitative data to best answer my research questions. It is my intent to use collect quantitative data regarding attendance (excused, unexcused, OSS) from the elementary buildings, using both the 2022-23 school year and the 2023-24 school year data (previous school years if necessary) and office discipline referral (ODR) data. The be more detailed in the research I also intend to use survey data from teachers surveys and use data from the PBIS School Climate Survey and the PBIS Self-Assessment Survey. Using the qualitative data will help support and elaborate the effect of a PBIS program on attendance data.

Fiscal Implication

The estimated costs to implement a Tier I SWPBIS program is stated to be between $5000 and $10000 for a two-year period. The greatest cost is the individual or individuals who provide the training for the core team and the school-wide training for the staff. The estimated cost for the core team workshop is $4000. The training includes two half-day professional learning sessions for the core team and a professional learning day faculty meeting for the whole staff training. There is also the cost of personnel time to attend the training sessions. The Wyoming Valley West School District pays $49/hour for compensation. The core team had six members who will each be paid for two 3-hour training workshops. The total amount for training if done over the summer would be $882 per workshop. If the workshop is done during the school year the cost for substitute teachers would be $125 per day or $62.50 for a half day. Five substitute teachers would cost $312.50 for the five classroom teachers who are on the core team. The principal and guidance counselor do not need a substitute teacher. There is also an annual cost for the

data system recommended by PBIS. The system is called SWIS (School Wide Information System) and has an annual cost of approximately $400. There will also need to be core team meetings and staff meetings throughout the year. These would have no additional costs. There are also costs for any leadership training or conferences. The estimated costs for registration, lodging and travel would be $1000 per person, and the district would send the two members for an estimated $2000.

The program would also need to have a fund for supplies, posters, and rewards, the school will create a fund with an initial amount of $5000. There will also be bi-weekly core team meetings. Core team will have to plan, organize, and generate an agenda. The team will also have to review data and create rewards systems.

Summary

This chapter explored the intersection of two crucial areas in school administration: student attendance and the implementation of PBIS. Against the backdrop of rising absenteeism, this research looks to understand how PBIS can contribute to creating a positive school climate that encourages regular student attendance.

Chapter II, the Review of Literature, will create a comprehensive investigation of the history, development, and effects of School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS), providing insights into the impact on student behavior, school climate, and academic achievement

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Introduction

This study's purpose was to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) would positively affect regular student attendance. Absenteeism has been an issue for many school districts over the years, but there seems to be a decrease in the regular attendance of students following the COVID-19 pandemic. Literature defines school climate as one of the contributing factors to absenteeism and chronic absenteeism could put students at serious risk of falling behind academically (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). This research was needed to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS would positively support regular student attendance.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

History of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

Positive behavior interventions and support was a response to the need to provide students with behavior disorders researched-based interventions. In the 1980's, researchers at the University of Oregon began using evaluation projects to provide interventions to students identified with behavior disorders, suggestions that more emphasis be placed on prevention, evidence-based practices, data-drive decision-making, professional development and student outcomes (Sugai & Simonsen 2012). This research showed that the prevention of negative behaviors at a school-wide level is important to having positive outcomes (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The research done at the University of

Oregon showed that a school-wide program needed to be implemented to help respond to negative school behaviors.

In the 1990's the Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports was enacted to provide schools with evidence-based practices to provide improved supports for students with behavioral disorders; this was done with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 1997. Positive behavior support is not a new concept, but the inclusion of PBS and Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) were added to IDEA, and this created the need to implement plans for students with disabilities (Sugai et. al, 2000). After the initial change, the focus shifted to school-wide behavior support for all students and a framework was defined with a focus on a "process or approach, rather than a curriculum, intervention, or practice" (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012, p.2).

Changes to educational laws in the 2000's, specifically the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and updates to Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, highlighted the importance of scientifically-based instruction and interventions (Klotz & Canter, 2006). Response to Intervention (RTI) was an approach that came out of the changes to these laws to help provide high-quality, evidence-based instructions and interventions to students who were at-risk or struggling (Klotz & Canter, 2006). RTI mostly focused on the use of evidence-based practices to make improvements in academics, but its applications have also been used to improve areas of social behavior, through frameworks such as PBIS (Utley & Obiakor, 2012).

What is SWPBIS?

School Wide Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions is a program to improve school climate through positive behavior interventions (Ryan & Baker, 2020). Since 2000 SWPBIS has been increasingly used in schools to promote a positive preventive continuum of behavior support to prevent detentions, suspensions, and expulsions as a reactive response to student behaviors (Flannery et al., 2009). SWPBIS is a school-wide approach that does not focus on curriculum but instead strives to change the school's environment by introducing improved processes and systems for making data-driven decisions concerning both student behavior and academics. It applies principles from behavior analysis, social learning, and organizational management to the entire student body in a consistent manner throughout the school. As part of this approach, schools create a set of positively phrased behavior expectations for all students and staff, ensuring that everyone is taught these expectations (Bradshaw et al., 2012).

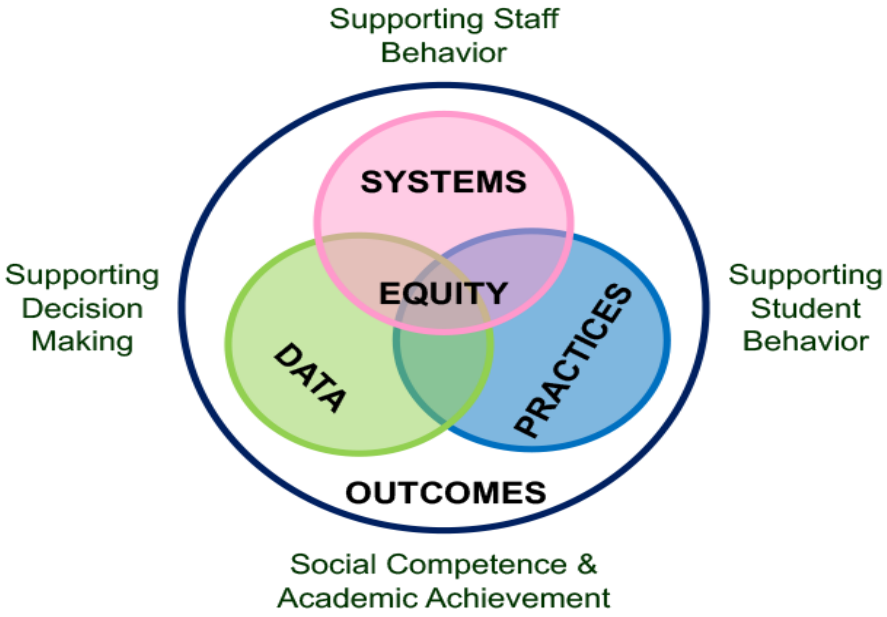
School-Wide Positive Behavior Support is a comprehensive approach designed to enhance the overall atmosphere in a school by implementing positive behavioral interventions on a system-wide level. This includes having a clearly defined purpose, explicit expectation by specific set rules or motto, and established procedures to promote compliance with these expectations and discourage violations (Cohen et al., 2007). PBIS is based on a range of evidence-based interventions applied across the school to proactively address challenging behavior, promote positive social skills, and reinforce these new skills. These well-defined practices, integrated within a three-tiered support system creates a positive climate for students' academic learning and the learning of social-emotional skills (Ryan & Baker, 2020).

PBIS is comprised of four key elements that are essential for effective implementation and the PBIS Center embraced a professional development approach that reflected integration of four interactive elements (Sugai & Horner, 2009). These foundational elements are: first, data where schools collect and analyze data to guide their PBIS implementation and evaluate outcomes. Second, outcomes where schools set measurable goals aligned with their values and students' needs. Third, practices that are evidence-based and well-defined, documented, and proven effective through research. Lastly, systems where schools establish administrative, professional, and organization systems to sustain PBIS across all tiers (Sugai & Horner, 2009).

Refer to Figure 1 for a visual representation of the Foundational Elements of PBIS.

Figure 1

Foundational Elements of PBIS



Note. Adapted from *What is PBIS?*, by Center on PBIS, 2024 (https://www.pbis.org/pbis/what-is-pbis). In the public domain.

Evidence Base for PBIS

PBIS is a systemic strategy rooted in the principles of applied behavioral analysis designed to foster a school culture that promotes a positive learning environment (Chitiyo, 2012). PBIS has a solid foundation in evidence-based intervention that is consistently applied across the entire school to prevent problematic behaviors and to reinforce new skills through a three-tiered framework (Ryan & Baker, 2020). This framework helps students by systemically supporting evidence-based practices based on the three tiers of intervention (Horner et al., 2010).

Mitchell, Hatton, and Lewis determined that four of five studies conducted determine that SWPBIS, when implemented with fidelity, meet the stand of What Works Clearinghouses (WWC), and show positive effects in the areas of students' behaviors, school climate, and staff beliefs (Mitchell et al., 2018). Tools that were used to make data-based decisions were using the Effective Behavior Support survey (EBS) and the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET), actively using the schools' data, a data system that allows for frequent monitoring, and using School Wide Information System (SWIS) (Flannery et al., 2009). These tools are pieces that are part of the foundational elements of PBIS by bringing together systems and data.

The Office of Civil Rights' (OCR) increasing efforts to enforce Title VI of the Civil Rights Act looked at school discipline rates and the negative academic and social effects resulting from the disparity between student groups. This review lead to a review of the harmful effects of the zero tolerance policies in schools (Robert, 2020). Roberts' data showed that a decline in the number of ODRs translated to a decline in the number of students receiving ISS and OSS, but African American and students identified as

receiving special education services still experienced higher ISS placements than White and Hispanic student (Robert, 2020). The OCR examined practices and policy reform to generate a plan to address punitive disciplinary approaches and recommend an approach focusing on positive behavior supports (Robert, 2020). SWPBIS is an example of successful implementation of behavioral theory to help address significant societal issues, such as improving school climate and improved social emotional competence (Bradshaw et al., 2012). There is a growing body of research affirming PBIS's positive impact on student behavior. Thus, it is valuable to reflect on what we are learning about its success (Horner & Sugai, 2015).

Development

SWPBIS is not a curriculum, but a process and that process can take time to develop. The two- to three-year process involves training leadership teams to implement an effective school-based preventative behavior intervention (Horner et al., 2010). This includes maintaining high implementation integrity, consistently using data for decision-making, embedding professional development, and coaching, and establishing a school environment that consistently promotes positive, safe, and predictable social interactions for all students (Horner et al., 2010).

Critical components like forming a leadership team to make data driven decisions and establish school-wide expectations are all crucial elements to effectively implement SWPBIS (Mitchell et al., 2018). Using the PBIS evaluation tools to collect baseline data allows the PBIS Leadership Team to review behavioral practices being used in the school and to help to drive the action plan that the Leadership Team will use to develop the purpose and vision statements and drive the development of the behavioral expectations

(Ryan & Baker, 2020). PBIS is founded on theories from various fields but is primarily based on the science of applied behavioral analysis and the strategies are selected by the local areas and individuals based upon the needs of the local school or districts (McIntosh, 2014).

The aim of this prevention strategy is to change the school's organization context to implement enhanced procedures and utilize data-based decisions to increase academics and reduce behavior problems (Bradshaw et al., 2012). PBIS team members must take part in intensive training and use consultations from a trained PBIS Facilitator to learn the foundational aspects of PBIS and how to use the data for decision making and best was to implement the practices that the team is learning to implement (Malloy et al., 2018).

Implementation

Positive behaviors interventions and supports was a response to concerns regarding school violence, problem behaviors, and a lack of discipline and there were principal factors that came out of the research about positive behaviors and supports (Sugai & Horner, 2002). A key factor for the successful implementation of SWPBIS is support from building administration. Support from administration was listed as critical for making sure the SWPBIS remained a priority and was not just a trend that would be gone in a year (Flannery et al., 2009).

Implementation of the practices are aimed at long-term improvements and responses to the interventions, rather than a short-term response to reducing the problem behavior (McIntosh, 2014). SWPBIS being implemented in early childhood settings involves several important stages, identifying three to five behavioral goals or outcomes, teaching these behaviors, offering constructive feedback for both positive and negative

behaviors, creating a nurturing learning environment, utilizing data-driven decision making, and providing comprehensive support at both systemic and individual level (Melekoglu & Diken, 2022). The study done by Melekoglu and Diken (2022) was insightful as it showed how the universal nature of PBIS was able to be implemented with fidelity in schools in Turkey and how positive supports and a positive school climate are effective educational practices in all countries.

PBIS implementation is driven by the decisions by the school-based team utilizing evidence-based practices, these teams are dedicated to using data to assess the specific needs of the students and select the best practices that address the needs of the students (Malloy et al., 2018). It is important for these school based PBIS teams to utilize the training and consultation to help to ensure successful implementation of the new framework (Malloy et al., 2018).

Tiered Interventions

The PBIS framework has a three tiers model of increasing interventions and support based on the needs of the school and the individual. Refer to Figure 2 for a visual representation of the three-tiered model. The first tier, Tier 1, is the universal or school-wide approach to promote appropriate social behaviors as a preventive measure (Mitchell et al., 2018). The universal Tier 1 level of SWPB includes specifying, educating, tracking, and acknowledging a list of behavioral guidelines for all students across the classroom and non-classroom settings with the primary goal of prevention and creating a social culture where students expect and support appropriate behaviors from each other, and academic opportunities are maximized (Horner et al., 2009).

SWPBIS is a multi-tiered system with the goal of decreasing students' problematic behaviors and to help promote a positive climate, this three-tiered framework brings together the school-wide system and more intensive interventions and support that focus on students at risk (Bradshaw et al., 2021). A PBIS framework comprises of three tiers of behavioral supports: the first tier (universal or school-wide) consists of evidence-based practices for all students; the second tier (targeted) provides additional supports to students with specific needs; and the third tier is personalized interventions for those student facing the most significant challenges (Malloy et al., 2018).

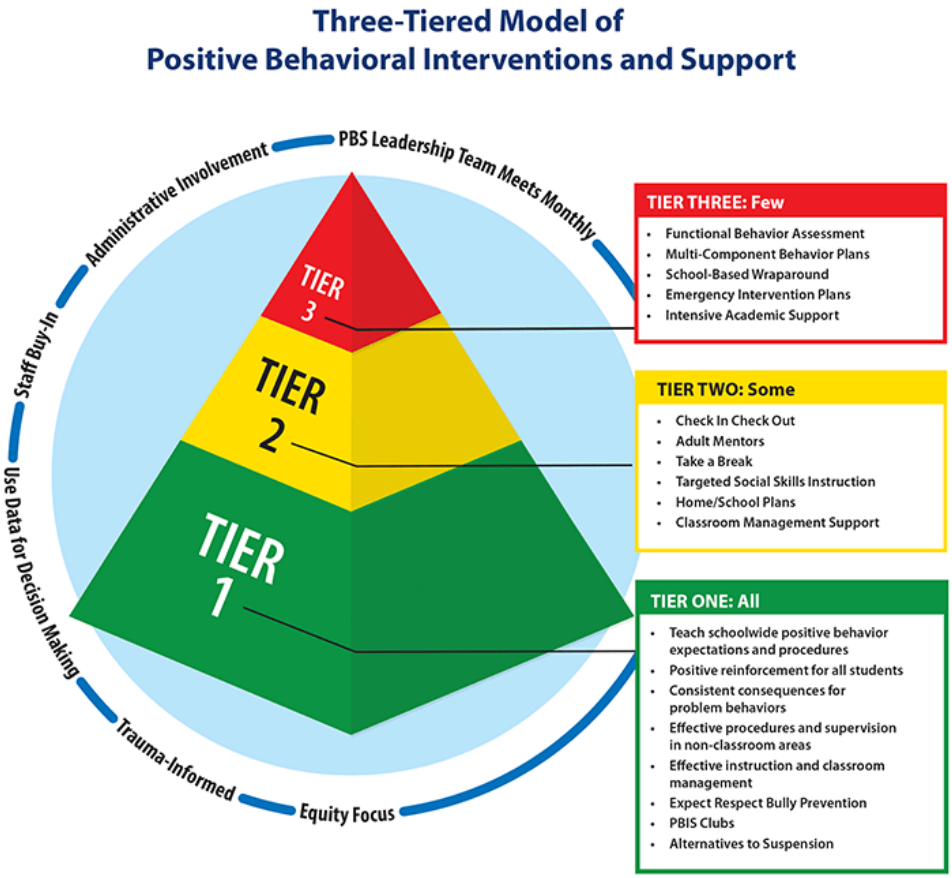
When a student continues demonstrating challenging behaviors Tier 2 interventions and supports are triggered and the use of data driven decisions are considered to address these challenging behaviors (Mitchell et al., 2018). The Tier II provides moderate intensity supports to address the needs of students exhibiting ongoing behavioral issues, these are tailored to act as supplementary to Tier I interventions and are focused on the 10-15% of students who are require more structured, explicit, increased positive reinforcement, and extensive training in behavioral expectations and self-regulation skills (Horner & Sugai, 2015). An example of an evidenced-based intervention that has been successful with Tier 2 students is the Check In-Check Out model (CICO). This intervention is aimed at assisting students in acquiring and displaying positive behaviors through increased positive adult attention and feedback (Malloy et al., 2018). The CICO behavior intervention strategy is typically used in school to support students who require additional behavioral support, the student will have a staff member designated to teach who reviews their goal for the day and provides them with personalized goals or tasks. The student will periodically check in with the staff

member and receive feedback, using in the form of positive reinforcement, encouragement, or accountability (Simonsen et al., 2010). Students who were identified in the Tier 2, CICO, and intervention showed immediate improvement after participating in the CICO model and that improvement was consistent over time (Malloy et al., 2018).

When a student exhibits chronic and severe problem behaviors or is engaged in repeated high-frequency incidents, intensive individualized support, or Tier 3, is implemented (Mitchell et al., 2018).

Figure 2

PBIS Three-Tiered Framework



Note. Adapted from *Positive Behavior Support* by Wayne RESA, 2024 (https://www.resa.net/teaching-learning/pbis). In the public domain.

PBIS Leadership Team

To ensure the PBIS is implemente in a school successfully is important to have a well-organized and effectively coached PBIS Leadership Team, a staff member in the school will be the Leadership Team coach (Ryan & Baker, 2020). It is important that the coach is not the sole representative in the school, the work for the leadership team needs to be shared (Ryan & Baker, 2020). To help ensure stability and to prevent being overly reliant on the coach, and potentially leading to burnout, all team members should reflect on the vision for the school and encourage the entire school community to embrace the PBIS framework. (Ryan & Baker, 2020).

Evaluation

The School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET) is designed to directly evaluate the effectiveness of how the school is implementing its Tier 1 prevention practices. It consists of 29 items that assess seven essential aspects of SWPBS, which encompass defining behavior expectations, teaching the expectations to students, providing rewards for appropriate social behavior, ensuring predictable consequences for inappropriate behavior, employing formal data systems for decision-making, involving a supportive administrator who is actively involved in improving student social behaviors, and having district level support for improving students social behavior (Horner et al., 2009). The SET generates a comprehensive score ranging from 0 to 100%, along with scores for each of the seven core features, a school is deemed to be implementing SWPBS effectively if the SET total score reaches a minimum of 80% (Horner et al., 2009). A limitation of the SET is that its scope is limited to evaluating the primary prevention, Tier 1, aspects of school wide PBS (Horner et al., 2004). The SET is also a useful tool for

school boards and school district administrators as it is helpful in evaluating the necessity for training for school personnel, gauging the influence of professional development related to SWPBS, evaluating the continued implementation of the SWPBS procedures, and creating an effective local strategy for enhancing SWPBS results (Horner et al., 2004).

The Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) is another evaluation tool used by the school's PBIS leadership team to assess the implementation of PBIS at Tier 1, to ensure consistent implementation it is recommended that the TFI is used quarterly (Ryan & Baker, 2020).

Another important evaluation tool is the Self-Assessment Survey (SAS), this is an online survey that staff members complete to rate items based on their implementation and importance (Ryan & Baker, 2020). Ryan and Baker (2020) recommend that the leadership team takes the SAS before the staff so that they have a better understanding of the survey and so they can compare it to the TFI. It is also recommended that school staff, including office support personnel, paraprofessionals, custodians, food service workers, and bus drivers (along with the teaching staff) complete the SAS (Ryan & Baker, 2020).

Barriers and Challenges to PBIS Implementation

One of the most predominant challenges a PBIS program has is teacher buy-in, SWPBS supporters say that there is a need for at least 80% of the faculty and staff to buy-in for successful implementation (Flannery et al., 2009). A way to overcome these barriers is by having staff involved from the onset and being transparent about the process and to keep the communication going for all the stakeholders, when you build

this trust, it will help to gain staff buy-in (Ryan & Baker, 2020). A challenge identified by teachers in the Malloy study was the challenges associated with having sufficient time for training, consultations, and meeting times for the Tiered teams (Malloy et al., 2018). An additional challenge to implementing PBIS with fidelity and maintaining program stability is to have consistent administrative support (Chitiyo et al., 2020).

There is a consistent barrier in changing the mindset of school staff on the effort to shift from an exclusionary or reactive approach to the implementation of positive behavior support strategies (Malloy et al., 2018). The use of PBIS coaches to help tackle these obstacles is an important part of the process. According to Malloy et al. (2018) the PBIS coaches will help with providing support to those who are reluctant to adopt PBIS strategies, which often stem from misconceptions about the method of PBIS or conflicting philosophical beliefs. To tackle these issues, the PBIS coach might collaborate with the school implementation team to pinpoint objectives that align with each staff member and identity results and data that hold significance for all involved (Malloy et al., 2018). The collaboration between PBIS coaches and school administrators are important in the school and having access to these resources are critical to implementation (Malloy et al., 2018).

A barrier to PBIS program sustainability could arise during the consequent years of implementation. This can happen when staff members think that they do not have to acknowledge students who are following the behavior matrix and when the frequency of student acknowledgment decreases, program fidelity also decreases (Ryan & Baker, 2020). Program funding can be another challenge. Programs can use grant money for initial implementation of the program and without planning for sustainability, insufficient

funding can cause the program to fail. A recommendation to address this challenge is to create a line item in the annual budget for program stability (Ryan & Baker, 2020).

Attendance

Definition of Daily Attendance

Compulsory attendance requirements in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are defined as "the period of a child's life from the time the child's parents elect to have the child enter school and which shall be no later than 6 years of age until the child reaches 18 years of age" (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2020, para. 4). Schools are required to have written attendance policies that comply with the above-mentioned compulsory attendance laws and the policies should specify the allowed lawful absences (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2020). One issue with tracking attendance is finding common language between all states. A report from Attendance Works (2023a), shows that 20 of 43 reporting states consider a half a day in school as the being in attendance for the day, while five states require more than half a day for students to be marked present. There are also four states that require data on the number of hours the students is attending (Attendance Works, 2023a). The lack of a common definition for what constitutes as being present can make some schools seem to have either a higher or lower rate of chronic absenteeism based on the LEA or SEA definition of attendance (Attendance Works, 2023a).

A study of elementary school students in Philadelphia looked at the differences between excused and unexcused absences on student data, including academic achievement. The study observed that students with a higher proportion of excused absences, as a part of their total absences, tend to have a positive correlation with

standardized test performance. The findings suggest that students who tend to have a higher percentage of excused absences are likely to achieve higher test scores compared to students with higher proportion of unexcused absences (Gottfried, 2009). There continues to be consistent or accurate systems in place to collect data of students who are chronically absent, even though there can be long-term societal impact for these students, specifically in areas of academics achievements, poverty, and graduation rates (Maughan et al., 2022).

Importance of Attendance

It is becoming increasingly rare, especially in a post-COVID world, that a student has perfect attendance for the entire length of their time in school. School attendance is extremely important, and studies shows that school attendance can be an indicator of future success (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). As more studies are being done on absenteeism and its effects it is being shown that chronic absenteeism is not starting in older grades, but it is beginning at the start of a students' educational career (Ansari & Gottfried, 2021). Students with chronic absenteeism face multiple challenges. Pre-kindergarten student are less likely to achieve proficient reading skills by the end of third grade and may be held back. By sixth grade chronic absenteeism becomes an early warning sign that can impact a student's likelihood of graduating from high school (Attendance Works, 2016). Research indicates that children tend to acquire more knowledge and skills during their early school years compared to later years and this suggests that absenteeism in those early years is especially problematic because children miss many learning opportunities each day of missed school (Ansari & Pianta, 2019). If

children are not present in school during these formative years, it can hinder their success later and have long-lasting consequences (Ansari & Pianta, 2019).

Some states also have financial concerns regarding students' attendance, as some states have funding based on students' attendance (Maughan et al., 2022). Pennsylvania is not one of those states. In a study done by Roby (2004) in Ohio School Districts, he found that proficiency test averages were higher and that students with higher annual attendance averages also have higher test averages. Roby's (2004) investigation of larger urban elementary schools also found that schools that had statistically significant higher annual building attendance were the same schools that ranked higher by proficiency using the Ohio Proficiency Test. Roby (2004) goes on to state in his conclusion that there is a correlation between student attendance and academic achievement and the importance of how much lost learning occurs when students are absent. The suggestion is made that school districts should consider incentives for improving attendance rates and that this would lead to more instructional hours, which would then increase academic achievement (Roby, 2004). Children that are chronically absent during the eighth grade years showed a notable decrease in their academic performance in literacy and math tests as well as their GPA, Ansari and Pianta (2019) showed that each additional day of absence was linked to a 0.01 standard deviation decline in literacy scores, a 0.02 standard deviation drop in math scores, and a 0.04 standard deviation decrease in their GPA.

Absenteeism

Reasons for Absenteeism

There is a multitude of reasons for absenteeism. Some of the issues that have been defined as barriers to consistent student attendance are family health problems, parents'

work schedules, family responsibilities, and transportation (London et al., 2016). School nurses play a vital role in proactively identifying students who are chronically absent due to health-related reasons and can help direct families to where they can get the necessary care, but there is little on a standardized process for school nurses (Maughan et al., 2022).

Freeman and her team have devised a chart categorizing the diverse factors that contribute to absenteeism, with potential influencing factors being categorized as school, family, or community (Freeman et al., 2020). Refer to Figure 3 for a visual representation of contributing factors for chronic absenteeism. These factors can intersect across the influencing contexts. Addressing school, family, and community contexts is vital for tackling chronic absenteeism (Freeman et al., 2020). Additionally, according to a U.S. Department of Education report from 2016, student with disabilities are notable more prone to chronic absenteeism than their peers.

Figure 3

Contributing Factors for Chronic Absenteeism

Contributing Factors for Chronic Absenteeism

Factors Contributing to Absenteeism	Possible Influencing Contexts		
	School	Family	Community
Avoid uninteresting or engaging instruction	•		
Deficit academic skills leads to avoiding instruction	•		
Avoid fear regarding lack of security (e.g., not feeling safe)	•		
Avoid bulling behavior	•		•
Obtain peer rewards for truancy	•		•
Lack of communication regarding absenteeism	•	•	
Lack of transportation	•	•	•
Poor health care (e.g., untreated asthma)		•	•
Poor mental health care (e.g., untreated anxiety)		•	•
Providing care for siblings (e.g., bring funds to family)		•	
Poor routine to wake, get ready, and go to school		•	
Unsafe pathways to school			•

Note. Adapted from *Improving attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism* by Freeman et al., 2020, p.4.

Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may face various obstacles that prevent them from attending school regularly, such as a turbulent family life, limited access to necessary school supplies, and transportation issues. These factors often work together to impede a student's ability to attend school consistently (Birioukov, 2016). Attendance issues often originate in elementary schools and become more pronounced when students transition to secondary schools, where they face increased academic demands and the loss of established relationships (Birioukov, 2016). The factors that Birioukov (2016) identified as contributors to absenteeism are an unwelcoming school environment, overcrowding, disrepair, perceived hostility among peers, bullying, and an irrelevant curriculum and these factors lead to academic struggles, grade retention, poor teacher relationships, and punitive disciplinary actions. The peers of an absentee may develop negative attitudes because they perceive that the absentee is receiving extra attention from the teacher, which they see as coming at their own expense. These negative peer attitudes may discourage the absentee, who may already have a negative view of school, from attending and thus increasing the absences (Birioukov, 2016).

Truancy

Truancy in Pennsylvania as defined by Act 138 for public schools and Act 39 for charter, cyber charter, and non-public schools, stating that a child is truant upon their third unexcused absence (Education Law Center, 2019). There are differences between truancy and chronic absenteeism that need to be defined. Truancy specifically pertains to only unexcused absences, while chronic absenteeism is comprised of any type of absence from school (London et al., 2016).

Chronic Absenteeism

"Chronic absenteeism is not the same as truancy or average daily attendance" (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Chronic absenteeism is defined as "students who have missed ten percent of enrolled school days across the academic year" (Pennsylvania Department of Education, n.d., para. 4). The emphasis needs to be put on addressing chronic absenteeism, as students who are chronically absent in one year are more likely to repeatedly be chronically absent in subsequent years (London et al., 2016). A study done by Ansari and Pinata (2019), found that students in kindergarten, sixth grade and eighth grade had higher absenteeism than compared to first through fifth grade. The rate of chronic absenteeism when measured over time showed that a typical eighth grade student would miss an average of sixty-three school days, but a student who is chronically absent would miss 189 days (more than one full school year) from kindergarten through eighth grade (Ansari & Pianta, 2019).

Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia chose chronic absenteeism as their additional indicator or as a measurement they will use as part of their accountability systems under the new ESSA requirements (Blad, 2017). Chronic absenteeism serves as a valuable indicator of school quality, according to numerous education organizations (Blad, 2017). It relies on attendance data that states collect and is influenced by a range of factors associated with student achievement, such as student engagement, the overall school environment, the use of punitive discipline measures such as suspensions, and the extent to which schools address students' non-academic needs (Blad, 2017).

Another contributor to chronic absenteeism is suspensions. There is evidence that suggests that removing students from school does not improve behaviors or school

climate, but can lead to increase in poor academic performance, more suspensions, and risk for contact with juvenile justice (Gage et al., 2020). A study by Ansari and Gottfried (2021) looked beyond using traditional academic achievement on standardized state testing, and also looked at the decline in areas such as executive function, socioemotional development, students' motivation, stress, and academic engagement. They suggested that these areas have not received sufficient attention, and their study suggests that policies aimed at reducing absenteeism and promoting school attendance must be based on a comprehensive understanding of how students' outcomes are influenced (Ansari & Gottfried, 2021).

During the 2013-14 school year, over seven million students in the United Stated missed fifteen or more school days (Bald, 2017). An analysis by Attendance Works showed that around 10,000 public schools (about 11% of all schools) had over 30% of their students chronically absent and another 10,000 schools had student absentee rates between 20-29 percent (Blad, 2017). Chronic absenteeism has drastically increased since the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Attendance Works (2023b), refer to Figure 4, the number of the enrolled students with levels of high or extreme chronic absences were at 66% in the 2021-2022 school year, which is up from only 25% 2017-2018 school year (Attendance Works, 2023b).

Figure 4

Nationwide School Chronic Absence Levels

2021-22					
Nationwide School Chronic Absence Levels	# School	Total Enrollment	Percent Total Enrollment	Number of Chronically Absent Students	Percent of all Chronically Absent Students
Extreme	39,890	20,633,834	42.5%	9,687,006	66.3%
High	20,489	11,617,225	24.0%	2,887,822	19.8%
Significant	21,380	11,321,227	23.3%	1,724,350	11.8%
Modest	7,111	3,424,769	7.1%	267,122	1.8%
Low	3,307	1,496,370	3.1%	42,225	0.3%
Total (n)	92,177	48,493,425	100.0%	14,608,525	100.0%

Note. Adapted from *Rising tide of chronic absence challenges schools* by Attendance Works, 2023b https://www.attendanceworks.org/rising-tide-of-chronic-absence-challenges-schools/). In the public domain.

Absenteeism after the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic affected different communities differently in relationship to the disparities in their access to remote learning. Research conducted in June 2020, involving a sample of 477 school districts, found that while 85% of districts offered instructional materials for distance learning, only about one-third had teachers provide lived or recorded lessons and only half of the school districts tracked attendance (Nadeem et al., 2022). Remote learning created a significant concern, considering that both early and chronic absenteeism are indicators linked to academic challenges and a decrease in graduation rates (Nadeem et al., 2022). Only a few teachers reported that most of their students consistently attended online classes, had internet access, or had suitable devices for distance learning (Nadeem et al., 2022).

A study done on the concept of "unfinished learning" due to the COVID-19 pandemic showed that students who disengaged from learning may have lost knowledge they once had due complications from the virtual and hybrid learning environments of the

2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years (Dorn et al., 2021). Dorn et al. 2021 shared that based on historical links between chronic absenteeism and dropout rates, if there were not efforts put in place to reengage students in learning, there could be the potential for an additional 617,000 to 1.2 million 8th to 12th grade students drop out of school (Dorn et al., 2021). Based on a survey of parents, it showed that chronic absenteeism among eighth through twelfth graders had risen by twelve percentage points, and 42% of students who were newly affective by chronic absenteeism were not attending school at all during the pandemic years (Dorn et al., 2021).

Attendance Works (2023a) states that chronic absence has grown into a national crisis since the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting 1 in 3 students in the 2021-2022 school year in comparison to 1 in 6 students in the 2018-2019 school year, which can be seen in Figure 5. This drastic surge in chronic absenteeism has begun to exceed a school's ability to effectively manage and respond (Attendance Works, 2023b).

Figure 5

Percentage of Elementary Schools with Extreme Chronic Absence

2021-22 School Year	Elementary Schools		Middle Schools		High Schools		All Schools	
	2017-18	2021-22	2017-18	2021-22	2017-18	2021-22	2017-18	2021-22
Percent of Schools with 30% or more students Chronically Absent	7%	38%	8%	40%	31%	56%	14%	43%
Percent of Schools with 20% or more students Chronically Absent	18%	60%	22%	66%	50%	77%	28%	65%

Note. Adapted from *Rising tide of chronic absence challenges schools* by Attendance Works, 2023b https://www.attendanceworks.org/rising-tide-of-chronic-absence-challenges-schools/). In the public domain.

Improving Attendance

School Climate

It is important to create a positive, welcoming environment for students. When a school district employs strategies that help to create a positive and safe school climate it encourages school attendance (Freeman et al., 2020). A five-year longitudinal study showed that when PBIS is implemented with high fidelity that ODRs associated with problem behaviors and students receiving Out of School Suspensions (OSS) are both reduced (Horner et al., 2010).

SWPBIS is an approach for intervention and prevention of behavior problems such as academic problems, school dropout, substance abuse problems, and antisocial behavior (Bradshaw et al., 2012). A study conducted on the on the effectiveness of Tier 1 interventions showed that teachers indicated students have fewer behavior problems under a PBIS program than students not engaged in PBIS programs (Bradshaw et al., 2021). In a study by Malloy et al. (2018), it was found that the daily number of ODRs decreased in one year of PBIS implementation from a daily rate of 1.34 per one hundred students in 2008-2009 to 0.85 in 2009-2010 and 0.74 in 2010-211 school year.

When developing school-wide expectations, it is important to be cognizant of the culture and community, including traditions and rituals (Ryan & Baker, 2020). Having behavioral expectations that match the school community and culture will help to create ownership of the program from the students and will help to increase involvement from families and the community (Ryan & Baker, 2020).

Improving Attendance with PBIS

According to a study by Freeman et al. (2020), there was a statistically significant and positive effect on attendance in schools that implemented SWPBIS with fidelity. The study showed that even schools working towards fidelity had higher attendance rates than schools not implementing SWPIBS effectively (Freeman et al., 2020). In a *Gallery Walk* to promote PBIS the district administrator from Mesa County Valley School District showed that there was a 3% increase in daily attendance and contributed the increase directly to the implementation of their PBIS program (Kennedy et al., 2012).

Attendance incentives work best when integrated into a comprehensive strategy that includes efforts to engage families facing significant attendance challenges. These incentives should be a part of fostering a school-wide culture of attendance, with a commitment to keeping students engaged in the classroom (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Balfanz and Bynes (2012) also suggest not only rewarding perfect attendance, but to also rewarding improved attendance and incentives for families to support attendance.

A Multi-Tiered System of Support like PBIS offers an effective approach to address chronic absenteeism by dealing with factors directly and indirectly contributing to absenteeism (Freeman et al., 2020). PBIS focuses on creating a safe and respectful environment, teaching essential social skills, fostering engaging relationships, and implementation behavior support plan for individuals or small groups (Freeman et al., 2020).

Attendance Works (2023a) identified “an erosion in positive conditions for learning” as a barrier for attendance and that there is a need for a systemic programmatic and policy solutions. One of the recommendations for policy change, in the article by

London, was to enact policies that describe the intervention process (London et al., 2016). A school wide intervention program can assist in making the intervention process more visible, by implementing and tracking these interventions. SWPBIS framework is described as a promising approach that helps in reducing problems for elementary school children (Bradshaw et al., 2012).

Summary

This study is looking to investigate whether creating a positive school climate through PBIS positively impacts regular student attendance, a concern given the increasing absenteeism post-pandemic. Recognizing absenteeism as a persistent issue, the study will delve into the potential of PBIS, a program that is rooted in research-based interventions for students with behavior disorders. The multi-tiered system utilizes evidence-based practices across the three-tiers to address behaviors proactively. The study evaluates the evidence base for PBIS, encouraging its positive effects on student behavior, school climate, and academic achievement.

The study also explores the differences between truancy and chronic absenteeism, the latter encompassing all types of absences while truancy focuses on unexcused absences. Emphasizing the importance of attendance, especially in a post-COVID era, the study highlights its role as an indicator of future success, with chronic absenteeism emerging early in students' educational journeys.

Freeman (2015) and colleagues categorize absenteeism factors into school, family, and community influences, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to address chronic absenteeism. Socioeconomic disparities are explored as additional obstacles to regular attendance, with lower-income students facing challenges such as

issues with the family life, limited access to school supplies, and transportation issues. Elementary school is identified as a critical period for the emergence of attendance issues that can grow when transitioning to secondary schools. Negative factors contributing to absenteeism include an unwelcoming school environment, bullying, and an irrelevant curriculum, that lead to academic struggles and disciplinary actions.

Strategies for improving attendance focus on creating a positive school climate, with PBIS identified as an effective approach. Studies show that school implementing PBIS with fidelity experience statistically significant positive effects on attendance rates. A Multi-Tiered System of Support, such as PBIS, are recommended for addressing factors contributing to chronic absenteeism, both directly and indirectly.

The method of data collection that will help me to successfully answer the questions and address the problem would be the use of mixed-method research using an exploratory sequential design. The use of this design would allow me to collect qualitative data, such as an interview, and analyze the data and then use interval quantitative data to build upon the data initially collected using the qualitative method. A Grounded Theory Research will be used to collect data on PBIS, which is already an existing broad theory that is utilized to address many problems in the school setting. Conducting interviews and observations about individual's experiences with PBIS and its relationship to improving attendance. A Causal-Comparative Research Method will investigate using PBIS as the variable, when collecting attendance data from the control (schools without PBIS implemented) and the variable (schools with PBIS implemented). This will help to better understand the differences in attendance between the different schools and assist in determining if PBIS does contribute to increased attendance.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

In this chapter, the researcher will outline the methodology employed to investigate the impact of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) on student attendance within the context of post-pandemic educational challenges. Recognizing the pressing concern of rising absenteeism and its implication for academic achievement, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of PBIS in promoting regular school attendance. Through investigating the multi-tiered framework of PBIS and its evidence-based interventions, the researched looked to reveal its potential as a proactive strategy to mitigate chronical absenteeism.

Through a mixed-methods approach combing qualitative interviews, observations, and quantitative analysis, this study endeavors to provide a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between PBIS implementation, student attendance patterns, and academic outcomes. Grounded in established research frameworks and guided by the goal of improving educational equity and student success, this methodology sets the stage for a rigorous examination of the roles of PBIS in fostering a positive school climate and enhancing student engagement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand how a PBIS program can effect attendance in an elementary school. The research can be used to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS has a positive effect on consistent regular attendance. The findings of this study can be used by school administrators to help

inform district and building administration how PBIS and a positive school climate can be used to decrease chronic absenteeism.

Research Questions

The action research study focuses on the following research questions.

Research Question #1: Does a School-wide PBIS program help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

Research Question #2: Does creating a positive school climate help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

Research Question #3: Does PBIS help decrease office disciple referrals resulting in out-of-school suspensions?

The research questions were written to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS will positively affect regular student attendance. The Wyoming Valley West School District has identified regular attendance as a priority issue. Question 1 looks at the extent to which the implementation of a PBIS program correlates with a reduction in chronic absenteeism among students. The collection of quantitative data from attendance information from the school building and qualitative data provided from teacher and staff surveys helps to support and elaborate on the effect of a PBIS program on attendance data by comparing the attendance data across multiple academic years.

Question 2 aims to determine how the establishment of a positive school climate influences the prevalence of chronic absenteeism among students. This questions is addressed through information provided through surveys of the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) which is designed to assess and evaluate the critical features of school-wide

effective behavioral supports across each academic school year and the School Climate Survey for School Personnel (SCS-SP) to measure perception of school climate. The SET offers a quantitative metric to evaluate the extent to which PBIS practices are being implemented as intended and helps gauge the consistency and quality of PBIS interventions within school and identify areas for improvement. The SCS-SP allows us to understand how staff perceives the school environment. Correlating SCS-SP data with attendance data can shed light on the contextual factors influencing attendance patterns and the overall effectiveness of PBIS implementation. This data allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of PBIS on chronic absenteeism, providing valuable insights for enhancing attendance initiative and promoting a positive school environment.

Research question 3 looks at the impact implementing a PBIS program has on the frequency of office discipline referrals (ODRs) leading to out-of-school suspensions. Determining this impact is essential for promoting positive school environments, fostering equity and inclusion, supporting student well-being, improving academic outcomes, and helping to cultivate positive relationships within the school community. High rates of ODRs leading to suspensions can indicate a negative school climate that is characterized by punitive discipline practices. Reducing these referrals aims to create a positive and supportive school environment. Understanding how PBIS impacts discipline referrals can help identify whether PBIS implementation contributes to reducing disparities and promoting equity in discipline practices. PBIS can better support students' social-emotional development, academic achievement, and overall well-being by minimizing out-of-school suspensions that disrupt students' educational progress and can

contribute to disengagement from school. PBIS emphasizes positive relationships between students, teachers, and administrators that help to rebuild trust and strengthen connections within the school community.

Settings and Participants

This mixed methods research study was conducted at Dana Street Elementary and State Street Elementary schools, which are two of the elementary schools in the Wyoming Valley West School District in Pennsylvania. The school district is located within Luzerne County, with State Street Elementary being located in Larksville and Dana Street Elementary located in Forty Fort.

The student population, as of February 2024, of the Wyoming Valley West School District is approximately 5200 students. Dana Elementary has just over 600 students and State Street Elementary has 1350 students enrolled. Both buildings are K-5 elementary centers. The student demographics of Dana Elementary are 67.8% White, 15.6% Hispanic, 8.9% multiracial, 6.5% Black, 1.1% Asian, and 0.2% other. The student demographics of State Street Elementary are 45.5% White, 25% Hispanic, 17.7% Black, 11.4% multiracial, 0.2% Asian, 0.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 0.1% Pacific Islander. 71.4% of the students in the Wyoming Valley West School District are identified as economically disadvantaged, with State Street Elementary having the highest percentage with 83.1% of the students identified as economically disadvantaged.

Dana Elementary has one principal, one guidance counselor, 35 teachers, and five support staff. State Street has one principal, one assistant principal, two guidance counselors, 89 teachers, and 15 support staff.

Dana Elementary is in its first year of implementing a PBIS plan and has a principal who in his first year, while State Street has had a plan for a five years and has a principal who is in his second year. The schools utilize the PBIS facilitator from Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18 to help to train the PBIS core team members and the buildings' staff. The facilitator works with the school to expand and sustain the implementation of PBIS across schools and early childhood settings, focusing on enhancing support structures, providing quality training, and promoting data-driven decision making across all levels of PBIS implementation.

An educator recruitment letter and an online teacher consent letter were shared with the Superintendent of Wyoming Valley West School District and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. These letters can be found in Appendix B. The educator recruitment letter was drafted and sent to educators in both Dana Elementary and State Street Elementary schools to clearly convey the purpose of the study, including the potential benefits of participation, and any relevant details about the study itself. The online teacher consent letter was also shared with all potential participants from both elementary schools to inform then about all pertinent information regarding the use of online survey forms for the purpose of ascertaining information about PBIS in their school buildings. The letter was used to outline key information about the study, including its purpose, the areas of research concentration, the procedures involved, potential risks, benefits, confidentiality measures, and contact information for me as the principal investigator and for the IRB.

Research Plan

The research plan was informed by the insights garnered from the review of literature. The literature review provided a thorough understanding of the challenges surrounding chronic absenteeism, the efficacy of PBIS, and the factors influencing attendance behavior. Drawing from this knowledge, the research plan incorporates a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative grounded theory research with quantitative causal-comparative research. This methodological choice is informed by the literature's emphasis on the multifaceted nature of chronic absenteeism and the need for holistic interventions. The research plan and intervention are intricately informed by the nuanced understanding of the research problem and existing evidence provided by the literature review.

The review of literature highlighted the effectiveness of PBIS in improving school climate, which helped to reduce disciplinary incidents, and helped to promote positive students behaviors. The research plan focuses on investigating the impact of PBIS implementation on reducing chronic absenteeism, resulting from either absenteeism or discipline referrals leading to out-of-school suspensions. Understanding the complex factors that contribute to chronic absenteeism, as identified in the literature review, helped to shape the research plan. Factors such as school climate, family issues or influences, and community dynamics were all considered when selecting data collection tools.

The review of literature also showed the importance of adopting a holistic approach to addressing chronic absenteeism, considering factors within the school, family, and the community. The data collection methods capture insight from multiple

stakeholders, including teachers, school staff, and building administrators to gain a comprehensive understand of the issues.

Additional insights from the literature regarding PBIS implementation strategies guided the research plan in helping to identify appropriate methods for assessing fidelity and effectiveness. The established PBIS frameworks aim to evaluate the fidelity of PBIS implementation and its impact on reducing chronic absenteeism.

The research plan incorporated mixed methods research into my action research plan. The researcher chose this methodology to use quantitative and qualitative data to best answer my research questions. The researcher collected quantitative data regarding attendance (excused, unexcused, OSS) from the elementary buildings, using both the 2022-23 school year and the 2023-24 school year data and office discipline referral (ODR) data. The researcher also used survey data from teacher surveys, the PBIS School Climate Survey, and the PBIS Self-Assessment Survey. Using qualitative data helped inform the effect of a PBIS program on attendance data.

The qualitative component, utilizing grounded theory research, examined the experiences and perceptions of individuals regarding the implementation of PBIS and its impact on attendance. Through interviews and surveys, this method captured rich, nuanced data, providing insights into the effectiveness of PBIS in improving attendance patterns.

Complementing this qualitative aspect, the quantitative component adopted a casual-comparative research method. By comparing attendance data between school years with and without PBIS implementation, this method allowed for the identification

of statistical differences and the assessment of PBIS's contribution to increased attendance rates.

The research plan drew upon established evaluations tools such as the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET) and the School Climate Survey for School Personnel. Incorporating these instruments, the plan ensured the systematic collection of relevant data points, enabling a rigorous analysis of PBIS's impact on decreasing chronic absenteeism.

The research plan strategically combines diverse methodological approaches and assessment tools to comprehensively investigate the research problem. The design effectively caters to the need for examining the effectiveness of PBIS in tackling chronic absenteeism within grades K-4 educational settings. It is structured to address the multifaceted aspects of the research problem, ensuring through exploration and analysis. Through a mixed-method approach that integrates qualitative and quantitative methods, the research plan provides a holistic perspective on the phenomenon under examination.

The estimated costs to implement a Tier I SWPBIS program would be between $5000 and $10000 for a two-year period (Horner et al., 2012). The greatest cost is the individual or individuals who will provide the training for the core team and then the school wide training for the staff (Blonigen et al., 2008). The estimated cost for the core team workshop is $4000. There would be two half-day training courses for the core team and a faculty meeting for the staff training. There is also the cost of personnel time to attend the training. The Wyoming Valley West School District pays $49/hour for compensation. The core team had six members who will each be paid for two 3-hour training workshops. The total amount for training if done over the summer would be

$882 per workshop. If the workshop is done during the school year the cost for substitute teachers would be $125 per day or $62.50 for a half day. Five substitute teachers would cost $312.50 for the five classroom teachers who are on the core team. The principal and guidance counselor do not need a substitute teacher. There is also an annual cost for the data system recommended by PBIS. The system is called SWIS (School Wide Information System) and has an annual cost of around $400. There will also need to be core team meetings and staff meetings throughout the year. These would have no additional costs. There are also costs for any leadership training or conferences. The estimated costs for registration, lodging and travel would be $1000 per person, and the district would send the two members for an estimated $2000.

The program would also need to have a fund for supplies, posters, and rewards, the school will create a fund with an initial amount of $5000. There will also be bi-weekly core team meetings. Core team will have to plan, organize, and generate an agenda. The team will also have to review data and create rewards systems.

Research Methods and Data Collection

The method of data collection that helped me to successfully answer the research questions and address the problem was the use of mixed-method research using an exploratory sequential design. The use of this design allowed me to collect qualitative data, such as an interview, and analyze the data and then use interval quantitative data to build upon the data initially collected using the qualitative method.

The qualitative method being used is a grounded theory research which will examine if PBIS is already an existing broad theory that is utilized to address many problems in the school setting. The researcher will do this by conducting interviews and

observations about individual's experiences with PBIS and its relationship to improving attendance. This will be done by utilizing data from surveys from the PBIS framework.

Grounded theory research was selected for how it allows for the exploration on complex phenomena, in this instance the implementation of PBIS and its impact on attendance, in a detailed manner. Grounded theory enables the researcher to uncover the underlying patterns, processes, and relationships inherent in the participants' experiences and perspectives (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It is also suited for investigating phenomena where there is existing theoretical frameworks that are available, allowing research to generate new theories or refine existing ones based on the empirical data that is to be collected (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The quantitative method used was a causal-comparative research method. In a study using PBIS as the variable, the researcher collected attendance data from the control, Dana Elementary school year without PBIS implemented and the variable, Dana Elementary school year with PBIS implemented. The researcher also collected data from State Street Elementary School for the past two school years. In the 2023-2024 school year the principal reorganized his PBIS team and reached out to the Luzerne IU PBIS facilitator for training for his new team. This will help to better understand the differences in attendance between the different schools and assist in determining if PBIS does contribute to increased attendance.

The use of a causal-comparative research method was chosen for this study for a few reasons. This method allows the researcher to explore the potential causal relationships between variables in the situations where true experimental designs are not feasible practically or ethically (Schenker & Runrill Jr., 2004). It is useful for studying

phenomena that have already occurred or cannot be manipulated by the researcher. It allows the researcher to compare groups that differ in terms of the whether or not PBIS had yet to be implemented. Causal-comparative research proves a valuable method for investigating real world phenomena in a naturalistic setting (Schenker & Runrill Jr., 2004). It offers a systematic and rigorous approach for exploring causal relationships between variables in situations where experimental manipulation is not possible, in this case for investigating the impact of PBIS implementation on attendance outcomes in the educational setting.

Data Collection

The research plan outlined in this study seeks to address three key research questions pertaining to the impact of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) on chronic absenteeism and disciplinary outcomes within the school environment.

Research Question #1: Does a School-wide PBIS program help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

The research plan for research question #1 incorporates a causal-comparative research method to investigate the impact of PBIS on student attendance. By comparing attendance data between two groups, one comprising of years without PBIS implementations (control group) and the other comprising of the year with PBIS implementation (variable group), the study aims to discern any difference in attendance rates. This approach allows for comparative analysis that facilitates the determination of whether PBIS implementation correlates with increased attendance. Through this method, the research endeavors to provide insights into the effectiveness of PBIS in positively influencing student attendance outcomes.

Research Question #2: Does creating a positive school climate help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

The research plan for research question #2 employs grounded theory research to delve into the application of PBIS within the school environment. PBIS, recognized as a comprehensive framework for address various challenges in school (Sugai & Horner, 2002), serves as the focal point of inquiry. Through interviews and observations, the study aims to capture firsthand experiences and perspectives regarding PBIS implementation and its impact on attendance improvement. Additionally, data from surveys within the PBIS framework will be utilized to enrich the understanding of PBIS practices and their association with attendance outcomes. This qualitative approach allow for an in-depth exploration of the role of PBIS in fostering a conducive learning environment and promoting regular attendance.

Research Question #3: Does PBIS help decrease office disciple referrals resulting in out-of-school suspensions?

Research question #3 adopts the causal-comparative research method to examine the impact of implementing PBIS on out-of-school suspension rates. Historical data on suspension rates were collected from two distinct periods: one without PBIS implementation (control) and another with PBIS in place (variable). This method facilitates an investigation into potential cause-and-effect relationships between the absence and presence of PBIS within the school environment. By comparing the suspension rates across these periods, the study seeks to clarify the influence of PBIS on disciplinary outcomes as assess its effectiveness in mitigating student suspensions.

The timeline for data collection began in December 2023 to January 2024, with a focus on initiating the IRB-approved data collection and implementing the action research plan. Following this, in February 2024, preliminary data analysis was conducted to acquire initial insights. March 2024 saw a deeper dive into the data analysis, with drafts of the results being prepared. By April, the data analysis was finalized, culminating in the formulation of conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

The researcher received permission to implement the doctoral capstone project for the Superintendent of the Wyoming Valley West School District on July 10, 2023 (Appendix C). The Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was submitted to the IRB at Pennsylvania Western University on August 1, 2023. The IRB reviewed my application and a meeting was held on August 9, 2023 to discuss the application and any additional documentation that was needed. The IRB Application was resubmitted on August 14, 2023 and an approval was received on August 21, 2001 (Appendix A).

The Online Consent Form was distributed initially on September 26, 2023 and again on December 11, 2023. There were two consent forms distributed, one to the faculty and staff and a second form to the administrators and PBIS Core Team members (Appendix B).

The School Climate Survey for School Personnel (Appendix D) and the School-wide Evaluation Tool: Additional Interview Questions (Appendix F) were sent to the teachers and staff at Dana Elementary School and State Street Elementary School on December 11, 2023 to being the data collection process. The surveys were sent using Microsoft Forms, all data collected from the online surveys was anonymous. The two

building administrators were interviewed in March 2024 using the School-wide Evaluation Tool: Administrator Interview Guide (Appendix E). Attendance data was collected using the school district's learning management system. The researcher was assisted in the collected of the data from a member of the Wyoming Valley West School District Information Technology staff. The researcher was provided with attendance data from Dana Elementary and State Street Elementary Schools for the 2023-2024, 2022-2023, and the 2019-2020 school years.

Validity

The researcher devised approaches to ensure validity. The research employed method triangulation to enhance the validity and reliability of the study findings by employing multiple data collection methods (Gorard & Taylor, 2004). The researcher gathered information through different means, such as interviews with building administrators, surveys, and document analysis. This provided a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. By using multiple methods, the research can cross-validate the findings, help to identify patterns or discrepancies, and gain insights from different perspectives. Method Triangulation helps mitigate the limitations of individual data collection techniques and strengthens the overall credibility and trustworthiness of the research results (Gorard & Taylor, 2004).

Quantitative data was collected through attendance records from Wyoming Valley West School District. These documents including information on excused and unexcused absences, as well as, information pertaining to suspensions and other disciplinary actions that would be a barrier for attendance. The qualitative data was collected through surveys with faculty and staff, administrators, and PBIS Core Team members using the School-

wide Evaluation Tool: Additional Interview Questions (Appendix F) and data from surveys distributed to teachers and staff using the School Climate Survey for School Personnel (Appendix D).

Summary

Chapter III of the doctoral capstone project delves into the methodology employed to investigate the impact of PBIS on student attendance, particularly within the context of post-pandemic educational challenges. Recognizing the pressing concern of rising absenteeism and its implications for academic achievement, the study aims to explore the effectiveness of PBIS in promoting regular school attendance. Through a mixed-methods approach integrating qualitative interviews, surveys, and quantitative analysis, the research endeavors to offer a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between PBIS implementation, student attendance patterns, and academic outcomes. Grounded in established research frameworks and guided by the goal of improving education equity and student success, the methodology chapter sets the stage for a rigorous examination of the roles of PBIS in fostering a positive school climate and enhancing student engagement.

The study's purpose is to understand how PBIS program can impact attendance in elementary schools, particularly by creating a positive school climate. The action research study focuses on three research questions addressing the effectiveness of PBIS in decreasing chronic absenteeism and office discipline referrals leading to out-of-school suspensions. Through a review of the literature, the research plan adopts a mixes-methods approach, combing grounded theory research with causal-comparative research to provide a holistic exploration of the research problem. Method triangulation ensures the

validity and reliability of the study findings, with data collected from various sources including attendance records, surveys, and interview with stakeholders. This comprehensive methodology aligns with the study's aim of understanding and addressing the complex phenomenon of chronic absenteeism within elementary school settings.

The study now moves to the crucial phase of analyzing and interpreting the collected information. This next chapter focuses on examining the data rigorously to understand the effectiveness of PBIS in elementary schools, particularly in reducing chronic absenteeism and disciplinary issues. By systematically analyzing both qualitative and quantitative fata, the study aims to uncover patterns and correlations that reveal PBIS's impact on student attendance and behavior.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis and Result

Introduction

This chapter will analyze the research from the data to determine the effectiveness of PBIS implementation on student attendance. The implementation of a PBIS plan in the elementary building will help to create a positive school climate to promote regular attendance. Reviewing the Pennsylvania Future Ready Index, Dana Elementary had a regular attendance rate of 69.8% during the 2021-2022 school year and State Street Elementary had a 50.5% regular attendance rate in the 2021-2022 school year. The statewide average of regular attendance in Pennsylvania was 73.9% and the Pennsylvania Department of Education set a Statewide Performance standard of 94.1%. The need for improvement in this area prompted the action research plan of implementing SWPBIS and including the goal of improved regular attendance in the school district's comprehensive plan.

In Chapter III, the methodology used to answer the research question is examined. Chapter IV will look at the qualitative results of the data collected from the surveys and quantitative attendance data collected from the school district. This information will allow the researcher to answer the research questions and help to determine the effect PBIS has on regular school attendance.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide this action research project:

Research Question #1: Does a School-wide PBIS program help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

Research Question #2: Does creating a positive school climate help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

Research Question #3: Does PBIS help decrease office discipline referrals resulting in out-of-school suspensions?

Chapter IV will analyze the data that was driven by these research questions and the quantitative and qualitative data that was collected during the 2023-2024 school year.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data was collected through the use of survey and interview questions. Surveys used were the SET staff interview questions and SCS-SP. Both of these were sent to staff through the use of Microsoft Forms. Building Administrators were given additional questions using the SET Administrator Interview Guide. Quantitative data was collected from the Wyoming Valley West School Districts' student information system, Skyward. The system was able to provide attendance data, including excused, unexcused, OSS, and ISS information.

Qualitative analysis included the thematic analysis of the survey responses from teachers, staff, and administrators. Through this qualitative approach, themes and patterns related to the perceived effectiveness of PBIS strategies in promoting regular attendance were identified and analyzed. Additionally, document analysis was conducted to examine school-wide policies, procedures, and practices that were related to PBIS implementation.

Quantitative analysis involved statistical examination of attendance records, including comparisons between pre- and post- PBIS implementation periods to identify any significant changes in attendance patterns. This analysis utilized descriptive statistics,

such as means and percentages, as well as inferential statistics to ascertain the impact of PBIS on attendance rates.

Triangulating data from multiple sources, this mixed-methods approach aimed to provide a robust analysis of the relationship between PBIS implementation and chronic absenteeism, offering valuable insights for educational administrators seeking to improve attendance outcomes in elementary school settings.

Results

The researcher analyzed the effectiveness of PBIS in reducing chronic absenteeism and improving disciplinary outcomes among K-4 elementary students. The analysis provides insights into the impact of PBIS and helps identify best practices from improving student attendance and behaviors.

The SET is a tool designed to assess and evaluate the critical features of school-wide effective behavior supports each school year. My research focused on the utilizing the Staff Interview Questions and the Administrator Interview Guide to provide data to understand the implementations and development of the school-wide program.

The SET was sent to the Dana Elementary and State Street Elementary staff using Microsoft Forms to complete the survey electronically, along with the Consent to Participate form. The SET was sent to 124 staff members between the two buildings and 28 responded to the survey. The Staff Interview Questions is a set of 10 questions, the first seven are for all staff and the last three are targeted for building PBIS team members only. Questions numbers 1, 4, 5, and 10 ask for a short answer response and questions numbers 2, 3, and 6 through 9 ask for a yes or no answer.

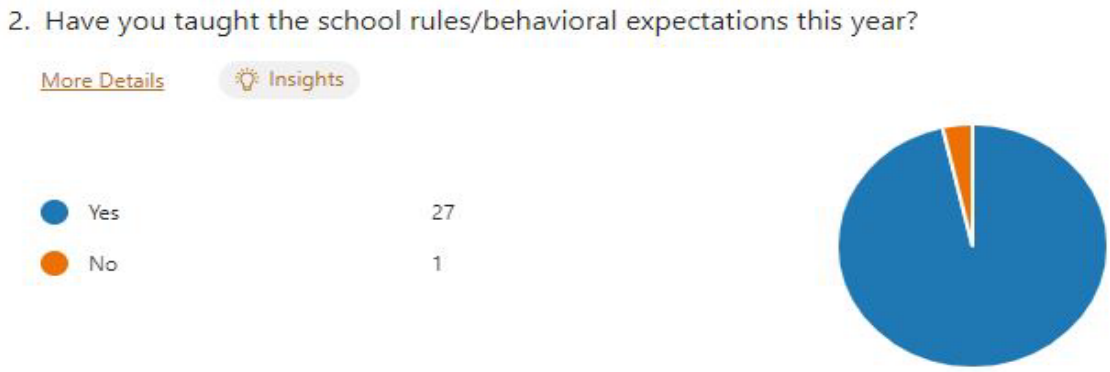
SET question #1 asks respondents to identify the school expectations or acronym. Twenty of the 28 respondents were able to accurately identify this information. State

Street Elementary uses the acronym ARMOR for Attention, Respect, Motivation, Organization, and Responsibility and Dana Elementary expectations are Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe. The eight respondents who did not accurately identify the expectation or acronym answered as followed: four were able to partially identify the expectations, two responded that they "did not know", one referred to the school rules, and one referred to the student handbook.

SET question #2 asks the respondents to identify if the school rules and behavioral expectations have been taught this academic school year. Figure 6 shows that 96% were able to identify that these have been taught this school year with only one person not identifying that they have been taught.

Figure 6

SET Staff Interview Question #2



SET question #3 asks whether or not the respondent has given out any rewards for appropriate behavior since October 1st of this school year. Twenty-six staff members (93%) were able to answer in the affirmative while two indicated that they have not given out any rewards, which can be seen in Figure 7. It helps in understanding the engagement of staff, the impact on student behavior, and the overall success of the PBIS framework in

creating a positive school climate. This information is helpful is vital for making informed decisions about the continuation and improvement of PBIS strategies.

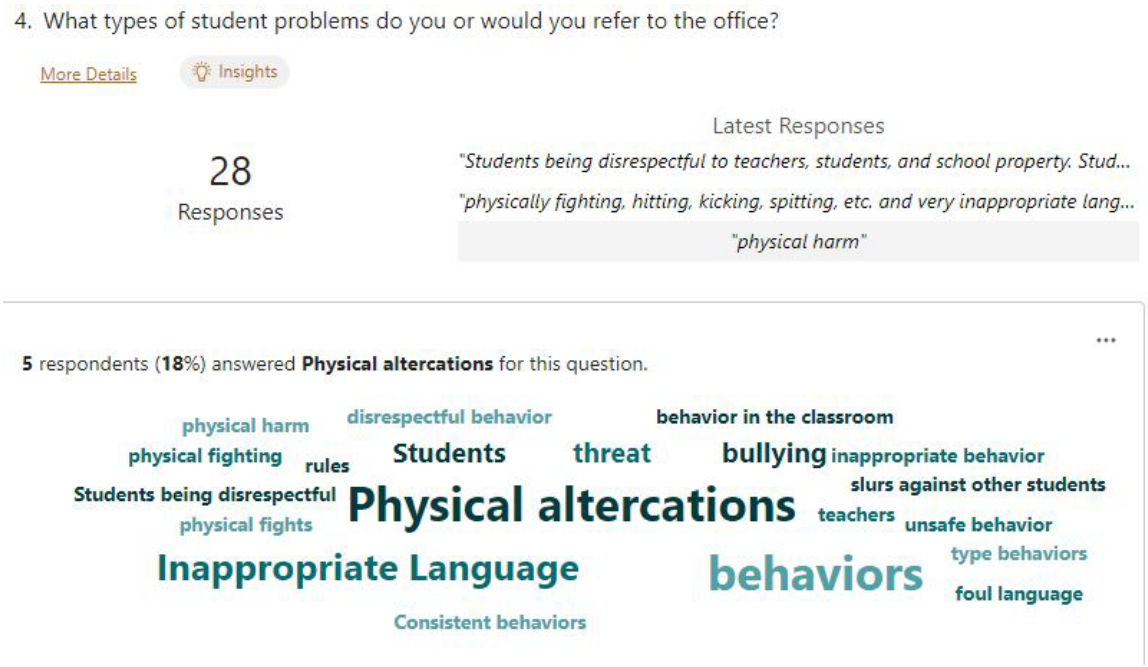
Figure 7

SET Staff Interview Question #3

SET question #4 asks the staff to identify the types of student problems they would refer to the office. The responses show that 18% or five respondents identified physical altercations as a behavior that would be referred to the office. Staff provided a lot of feedback in the open-ended question. Twenty-two of the 28 staff identified physical altercations, fighting, hitting, and causing physical harm as being instances for which they would involve the office. Other areas identified as giving staff cause to send a student to the office included threats, defiance or disrespect, bullying, racial comments, mention of weapons, mental health concerns, sexual assault concerns, and student who need tier 2 or tier 3 supports. Figure 8 displays responses to SET question #4, the larger the type size the more respondents wrote in that term or phrase. Five of the respondents wrote in “physical altercations,” which is why it is the largest font.

Figure 8

SET Staff Interview Question #4

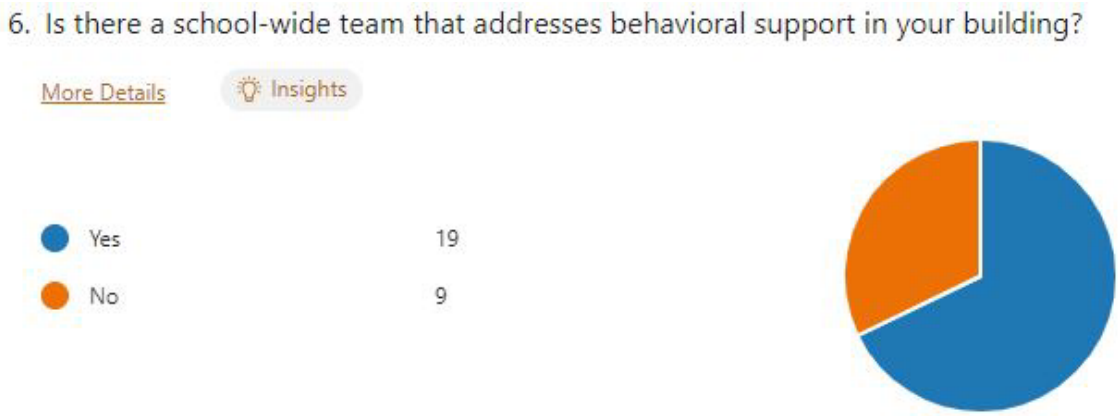


SET question #5 asks staff to identify the procedure for dealing with a stranger with a gun. Twenty-one of the respondents had in their answer lockdown or referred to the lockdown procedures. Other answers indicated to contact police or school resource officer and ensure students are safe. School safety is an integral part of the school environment and school safety. Freeman et al. (2020) identifies a fear of a lack of security as a another contracting factor to chronic absenteeism. The teachers being able to identify lockdown procedures or school procedures help to create a safe school environment.

SET question #6 asks the interviewees about their school-wide team that addresses behavior supports in the building. Figure 9 shows that nineteen (68%) indicated that there is a team in place and nine (32%) did not believe that their building had a team in place.

Figure 9

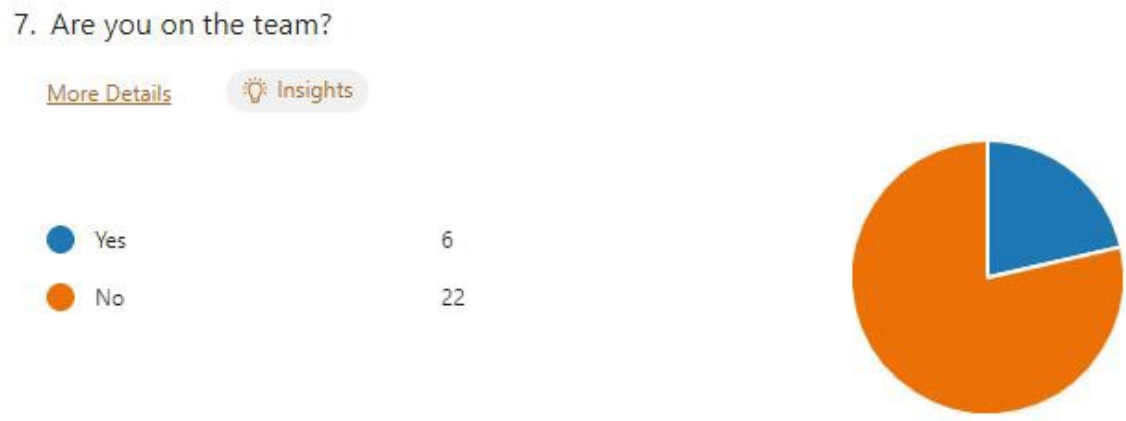
SET Staff Interview Question #6



SET question #7 simply asks the respondent if they are a PBIS core team member. Figure 10 shows the six respondents that identified as core team members were then promoted to respond to questions 8-10. The 22 staff members who responded no were asked no further questions using the SET Staff Interview Question tool.

Figure 10

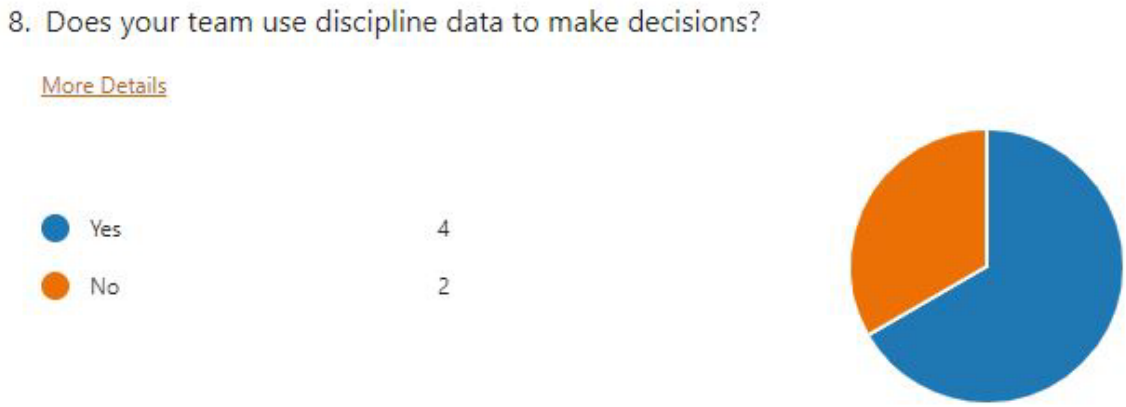
SET Staff Interview Question #7



SET question #8 is looking to see if the buildings are using discipline data to make decisions. Figure 11 shows that four of the six team members identified that the data is used for driving decision making.

Figure 11

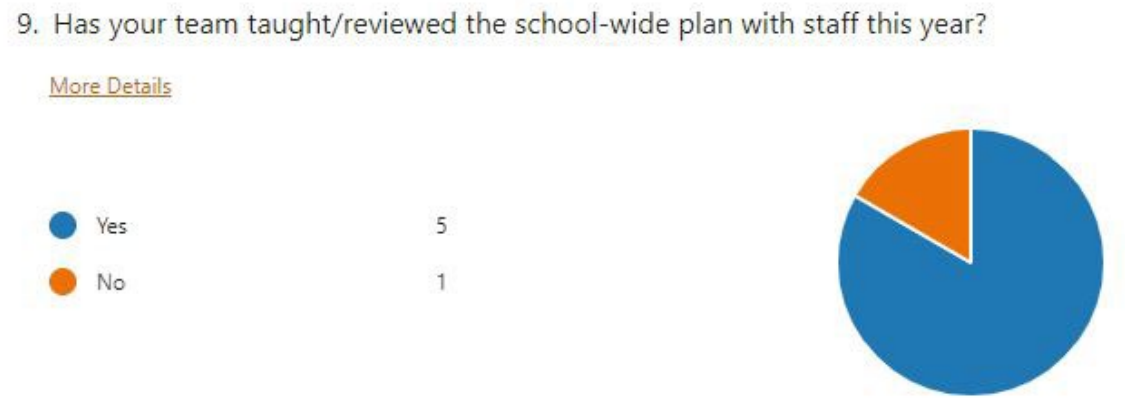
SET Staff Interview Question #8.



SET question #9 prompts the respondents to identify if the school-wide plan was taught or reviewed this school year. In Figure 12 you can see that five of the six were able to identify that the plan was taught or reviewed this school year.

Figure 12

SET Staff Interview Question #9



SET question #10 asks the core team members to identify the team leader or facilitator. Three identified Mr. DeRocco, Dana Elementary building principal, as the team leader, two identified Mrs. Boich, State Street Elementary guidance counselor, as team leader and one said the School Based Behavior Health team as the lead.

Next, the researched examined the responses to the Administrator Interview Guide. The responses to the SET Staff Interview Questions along with the Administrator Interview Guide questions help to be able to understand the ongoing efforts of the schools and their PBIS program which helps to answer my research questions and how the PBIS program can improve regular school attendance.

The building administrators were surveyed individually using the SET Administrator Interview Guide (Appendix E). The administrators were asked 20 questions regarding the discipline system, school rules or motto, their school-wide team, and how they address discipline.

The building administrator from State Street Elementary indicated that they do collect and summarize office discipline referrals (ODRs) and that they use their learning management system, Skyward, to collect out-of-school and in-school suspension data. The assistant principal and the guidance counselors enter that data into Skyward. They use this data to identify high incident areas and times to address the needs of the building. The principal, assistant principal, guidance counselors, and PBIS core team review this data periodically. The types of ODRs from the teachers that the building administrator expects includes major offenses; such as fighting, bullying, inappropriate/vulgar language, and repeated minor offenses that occur in the classroom. When asked about the procedures for handling extreme emergencies in the building, the administrator indicated

that they would follow the emergency plans, go on lockdown and be in communication with the school resource officer.

When the State Street administrator was asked about the school ruses and motto he indicated that the motto is ARMOR, which stands for Attention, Responsibility, Motivation, Organization, and Respect. This goes along with the phrase that the students are "Wearing their ARMOR," to indicate they are aware and following the PBIS expectations. Students are acknowledged several ways through their PBIS program. There are ARMOR bucks that students can earn to "purchase" rewards. They have a "Spotlight of the Month," which is similar to a student of the month program, and they have partnered with the local minor league baseball team, the Scranton Wilkes Barre Railriders to participate in their MVP program. Selected students earn two tickets to a game and they have their name appear on the jumbotron indicating they have been selected as their schools "MVP".

When the State Street administrator was asked if they have taught or reviewed the school wide plan this year they indicated yes and that their school-wide team is representative of the school staff (inclusive of different grade levels and departments). Their PBIS team meets monthly and the administrator attends these monthly meetings. The team facilitator is one of the school's special education teachers. They provide updates to faculty on activates and data summaries following these monthly meetings. The local Intermediate Unit, Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18, provides liaisons to support their PBIS program. When asked about the top three school improvement goals the administrator indicated that he would like to see a decrease in the number of suspensions, have an increase in the number of students who are on grade level in math and reading,

and meet fidelity with their PBIS program. The last question asked if there is allocation in the school budget for this program, to which the school administrator indicated that there is not.

The Dana Elementary school administrator was asked the same questions, using the SET Administrator Interview Guide (Appendix E). There were several areas that were the same as State Street. Dana Elementary using Skyward to collect and summarize ORDs. They collect minor and major infractions and the school guidance counselor collects the data. At Dana Elementary, the teachers use Skyward to directly enter the ODRs into the learning management system, in lieu of sending paper copies to the office. The data is shared with the guidance counselor and the school's behavior specialist. Using Skyward to enter the ODRs, teachers are able to see their own data, and it is only shared using the learning management system. The type of problems that they expect to be sent to the office rather than handling in the classroom would be physical offenses or multiple verbal offenses. When asked about the procedures for handling extreme emergencies, the administrator indicated that they would follow the emergency plans and that all teachers have a copy of the plans in their building, and that they would communicate with the local police.

The next section of the administrator interview guide asks about the school rules or motto which is "Be Safe, Be Responsible, and Be Respectful" and the students are encouraged to "Be Spartan Proud." They recognize students for being "Spartan Proud" by earning Dana Dollars to "purchase" rewards and they have a Student of the Month program.

Dana Elementary taught the school-wide program to staff this year, it was their first year of SWPBIS implementation. Just like State Street, the team is made up of staff from different grade levels and departments. The principal is on the team and they meet quarterly, but would like to meet as a team more frequently. The team facilitator is the school guidance counselor. They have yet to regularly provide the staff with updates on activities or summaries, particularly the summaries on discipline. Dana Elementary also utilizes the PBIS liaisons from the Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18 to help support them in the implementation of their program. The three goals for improvement for Dana elementary were similar to that of State Street. They indicated that they would like to see a decrease in the number of ODRs, to see an increase in the number of students on grade level for reading, and to have a successful implementation of their SWPBIS program in its inaugural year. The last question asked if there is allocation in the school budget for this program, to which the school administrator indicated that there is not.

The next survey that was distributed to school staff was the PBIS School Climate Survey for School Personnel. The survey included nine questions regarding the demographics and work experience and there were 29 questions regarding school climate. The 29 questions utilized a Likert scale and participants were asked to respond by choosing: strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree, or strongly agree. The 29 questions were divided into six subtopics and those subtopics were staff connections, structure for learning, school safety, physical environment, peer and adult relations, and parent involvement.

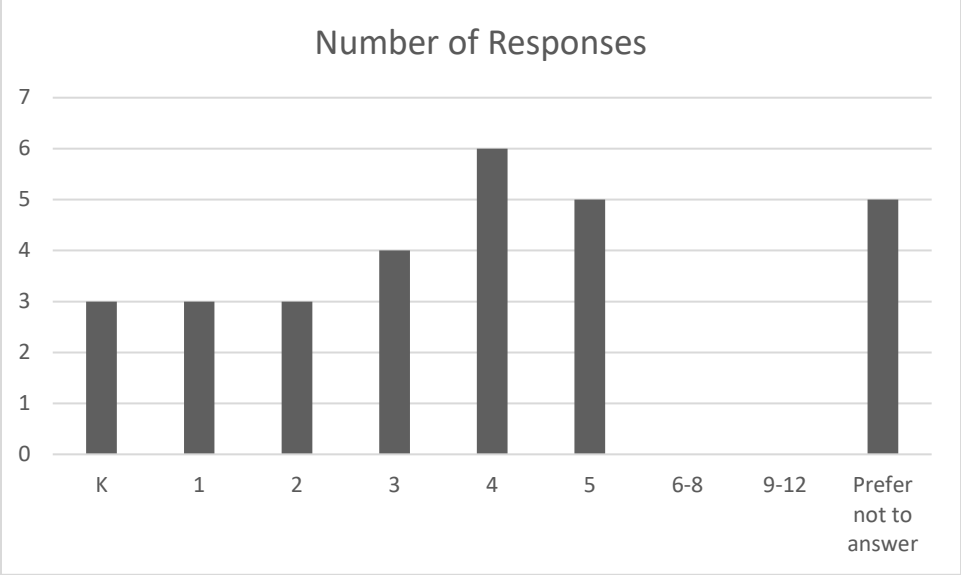
The School Climate Survey for School Personnel was sent to the Dana Elementary and State Street Elementary staff using Microsoft Forms to complete the

survey electronically, along with the Consent to Participate form. The survey was sent to 124 staff members between the two buildings and 29 responded to the survey.

The nine survey questions asked about information regarding the participant. The first question asked about the person's primary job classification. There were 28 responses for teacher and one for certified staff member. The second question asked what grade level they taught. The breakdown can be seen in Figure 13 below.

Figure 13

Primary Grade Taught



The third question asked the area(s) taught, referring to the academic subject. Five responded that they taught ELA, two responded connections (art, pe, band, etc.), five responded math, one responded special education, two preferred not to answer, and 14 chose other.

The fourth question prompted the participants to enter the years of work experience. Figure 14 shows the level of teacher experience broken down into five

groupings. Twenty-one of the 29 teacher responded that they have more than 15 years of teaching, while six responded to having 11-15 years of experience, and one teacher responded that they have 6-10 years or 0-5 years or experience.

Figure 14

Years of Teaching Experience

The next question asked the school personnel about their highest degree awarded. There were 26 teacher who responded that a master's degree was the highest, while three responded to having an educational specialist degree.

The next three questions asked the school personnel about personal demographic information. There were 24 women, four men, one indicated that they prefer not to answer. There were 28 who identified as not Hispanic or Latino/a/e and one who was Hispanic or Latino/a/e. Then when asked about race 28 indicated they were white, while one chose that they preferred not to answer.

After responding to those initial demographic and informational questions the survey then delves into the questions regarding the PBIS program and teachers

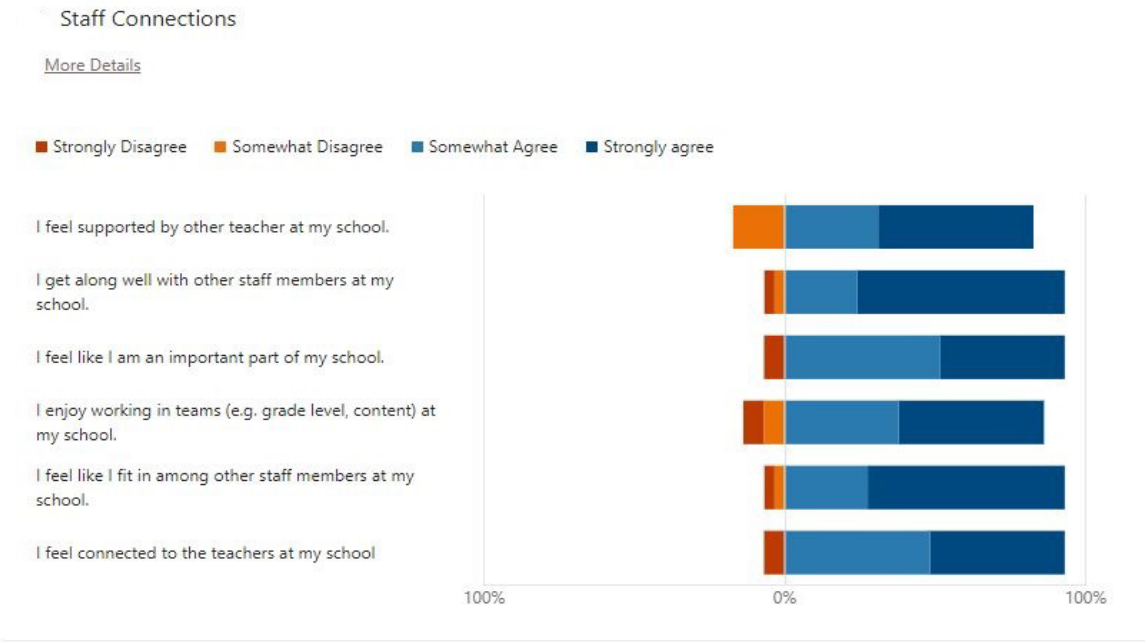
perceptions of the school climate. Questions 1-6 asked about staff connectedness and their perceptions about how they fit in or are a part of their school.

The staff connections portion of the survey provided data that highlights a positive school climate where teachers generally feel supported, valued, and connected to their peers. However, there was a small percentage of teachers who do not share these positive perceptions. Having strong connections among staff, school can enhance the effectiveness of PBIS, leading to improved student behavior, increased attendance, and a more supportive learning environment.

Figure 15 shows how the teachers responded to the questions regarding staff connections. When asked if they feel supported by other teachers at their school 51.7% responded strongly agree, 31% somewhat agree, and 17.2% somewhat disagree. The next question asked if they get along with other staff members at their school and the responses were that 69% strongly agree, 24.1% somewhat agree, 3.4% somewhat disagree, and 3.4% strongly disagree. Next they were asked if they feel that they are an important part of their school. For that question; 41.4% strongly agree, 51.7% somewhat agree, and 6.9% strongly disagree. The following question asked how they enjoy working in teams (grade level, content area) at their school. For that question; 48.3% strongly agree, 37.9% somewhat agree, 6.9% somewhat disagree, and 6.9% strongly disagree. The next question asked if they feel like they fit in among other staff members at their school and the responses were, 65.5% strongly agree, 27.65 somewhat agree, 3.4% somewhat disagree, and 3.4% strongly disagree. The final question in staff connections asked if they feel connected to the teachers at their school, and 44.8% strongly agree, 48.3% somewhat agree, 6.9% strongly disagree.

Figure 15

School Climate Survey: School Personnel – Staff Connections



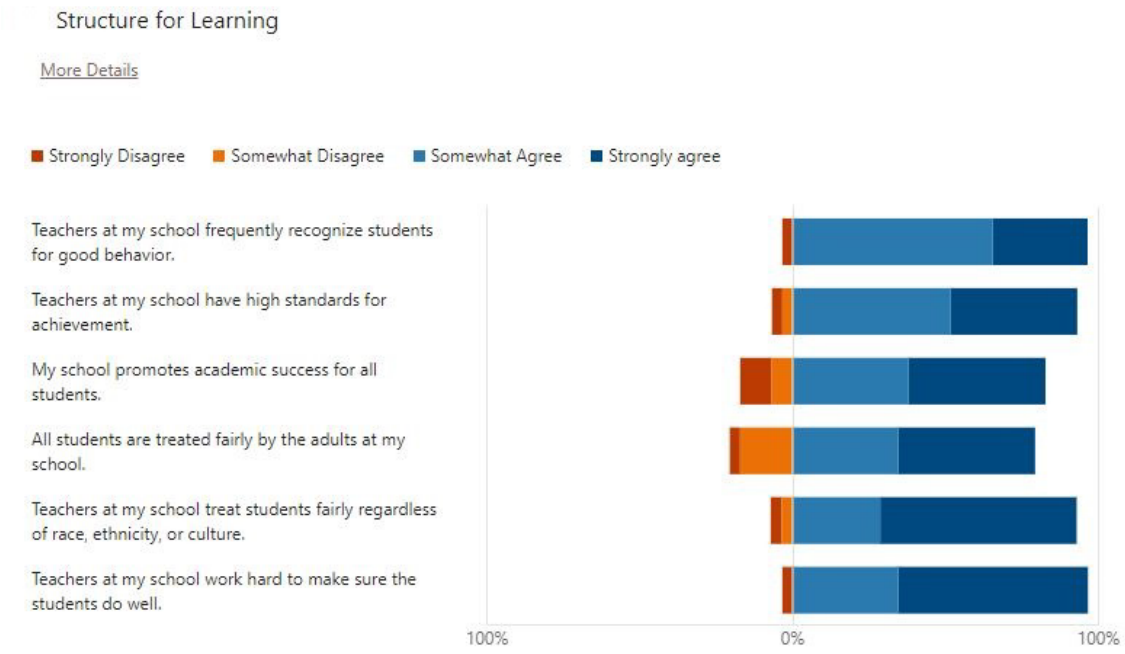
This part of the survey helped to provide a detailed look into teachers' perceptions of their relationships and sense of belonging within the school environment. This information let me know that teachers have a strong sense of support with over half the teachers (51.7%) strongly agree that they feel supported by other teachers. A significant majority (69%) strongly agree that they have positive relationships with their colleagues. An overwhelming majority (93.1%) of the teachers responded that they strongly or somewhat agree to feeling valued and that they are an important part of their school. Most of the teachers feel that they fit in among their colleagues as 65.5% strongly agree and 27.6% somewhat agree. A majority of teachers feel connected to their peers, with 44.8% strongly agreeing and 48.3% somewhat agreeing.

The second subgroup of questions, questions 7-12, is based on the structure for learning Figure 16. This asks the school personnel their perceptions of the way in which

they believe their colleagues interact with students. This is help to determine perceptions about students being treated fairly, staff following the PBIS expectations, and if clear rules are established.

Figure 16

School Climate Survey: School Personnel – Structure for Learning



When teachers were asked if teachers at their school frequently recognize students for good behavior 31% answered that they strongly agree, 65.5% somewhat agree, 0% answering that they somewhat disagree, and 3.5% strongly disagreed to that statement. The next question asked if teachers at their school have high standards for achievement. The responses were as followed; 41.4% strongly agree, 51.7% somewhat agree, 3.4% somewhat disagree, and 3.4% strongly disagree. When asked if their school promotes academic success for all students 44.8% strongly agreed, 38% somewhat agree, 6.9% somewhat disagree, and 10.3% strongly disagreed. The next question wanted to know if

all students are treated fairly by the adults at their school; 44.8% strongly agree, 34.5% somewhat agree, 17.2% somewhat disagree, and 3.4% strongly disagree. Next the participants were asked if teachers at their school treat students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture. The responses were that 64.3% strongly agree, 28.6% somewhat agree, 3.6% somewhat disagree and 3.6% strongly disagree. The final question in this section asked if teachers at their school work hard to make sure the students do well and the responses were that 62.1% strongly agree, 34.5% somewhat agree, 0% somewhat disagree, and 3.4% strongly disagree.

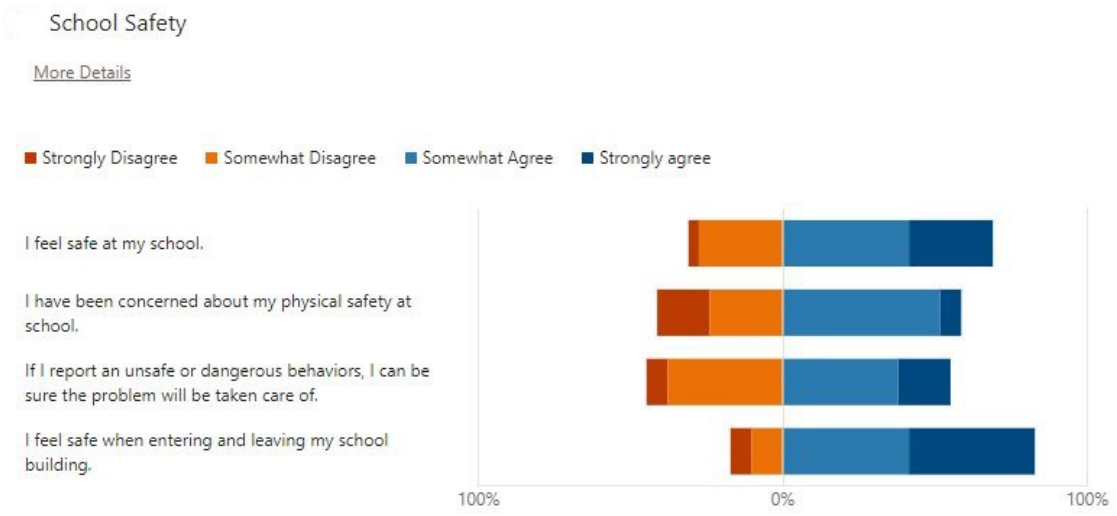
This information allowed me to look at the teachers' perceptions of their school environment, focusing on student recognition, academic standards, fairness, and commitment to student success. The researcher found that the majority of teachers (31% strongly agree and 65.5% somewhat agree) that students are frequently recognized for good behavior, indicating a positive reinforcement culture within the school. Most teachers perceive that their school maintains high standards for student achievement, with only 6.8% responding that they somewhat or strongly disagree. There is general feeling that the school promotes academic success for all students. However 6.9% somewhat disagreed and 10.3% strongly disagreed indicating some concerns about the inclusivity of academic success. When asked about the fair treatment of students the majority of teachers agreed that all students are treated fairly, but there were some that expressed concern about fairness with 17.2% somewhat disagreeing and 3.4% strongly disagreeing. The next question showed that over 92% of the teachers either strongly or somewhat agreed that teachers treat students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture. When asked about the commitment to student success over 95% of teachers agree that their

colleagues work hard to ensure student success. The data in this section suggests that teachers perceive their school environment positive in terms of recognizing good behavior, maintaining high academic standards, promoting success, and treating students fairly. However, there are areas where a small percentage of teacher see room for improvement, particularly in the promotion of academic success for all students and ensuring fairness.

The third subgroup is regarding school safety. Questions 13-16 ask the school personnel about their perceptions of their own safety in the school building. The responses to the four questions in this section can be seen in Figure 17.

Figure 17

School Climate Survey: School Personnel – School Safety



When asked if the participants felts safe at their school 27.6% strongly agreed, 41.4% somewhat agreed, 27.6% somewhat disagreed, and 3.4% strongly disagreed. The next question asked if the teachers have been concerned about their physical safety at the school, 6.9% strongly agreed, 51.7% somewhat agreed, 24.1% somewhat disagreed, and

17.2% strongly disagreed. The third question asked if the teachers report an unsafe or dangerous behavior they can be sure the problem will be taken care of. The responses were that 17.2% strongly agreed, 37.9% somewhat agreed, 37.9% somewhat disagreed, and 6.9% strongly disagreed. The final question in the section asked if the teacher feels safe when entering and leaving their school building. There were 41.4% of teachers who strongly agreed, 41.4% somewhat agreed, 10.3% somewhat disagreed, and 6.9% strongly disagreed.

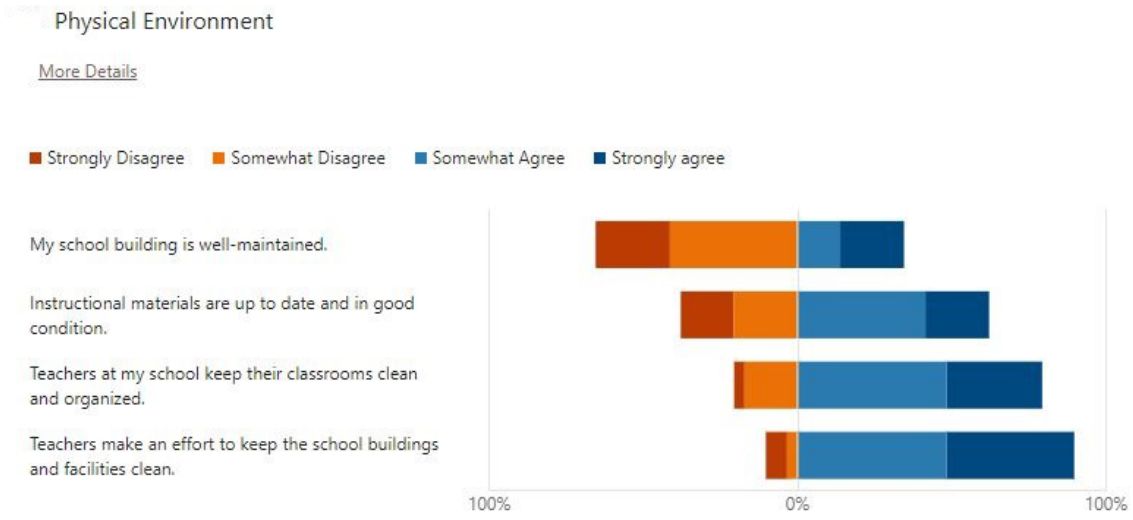
There were mixed feelings about safety measures and their effectiveness when teachers were asked about their perceptions of their safety within the school environment. When looking at overall school safety 69% of respondents (27.6% strongly and 41.4% somewhat agreed) feel safe. However, 31% do not feel secure, indicating safety concerns from about one-third of the staff. A majority, 58.6%, expressed concerns about their physical safety at their school, which highlighted a divided perception regarding physical safety. When looking at confidence in reporting unsafe behaviors only a small portion of respondents, 17.2% strongly agreed, feeling confident that reporting unsafe or dangerous behavior will result in action being taken, with another 37.9% somewhat agreeing. However, 44.8% lack this confidence, suggesting issues with the effectiveness of the school's response to safety concerns. If students or parents have concerns for school safety this can create another barrier for regular attendance.

The next subgroup of questions focused on the physical environment of the school. Questions 17-20 ask school personnel their perceptions regarding the maintenance of the school grounds and the resources available, which can be seen in Figure 18. When asked if their school building is well-maintained 20.7% strongly agreed,

13.8% somewhat agreed, 41.4% somewhat disagreed, and 24.1% strongly disagreed. Next the teachers were asked if instructional material are up to date and in good condition. The responses were that 20.7% strongly agreed, 41.4% somewhat agreed, 20.7% somewhat disagreed, and 17.2% strongly disagreed. The participants were then asked if teachers at their school keep their classrooms clean and organized, 31% strongly agreed, 48.3% somewhat agreed, 17.2% somewhat disagreed, and 3.4% strongly disagreed. The final question in this section asked if teachers make an effort to keep the school buildings and facilities clean. The responses to this question were that 41.4% strongly agreed, 48.3% somewhat agreed, 3.4% somewhat disagreed, and 6.9% strongly disagreed.

Figure 18

School Climate Survey: School Personnel – Physical Environment



The responses to this section provided insight into the school personnel's perceptions of the physical environment of their school, focusing on the maintenance of the school grounds, the condition of instructional materials, and cleanliness. A minority,

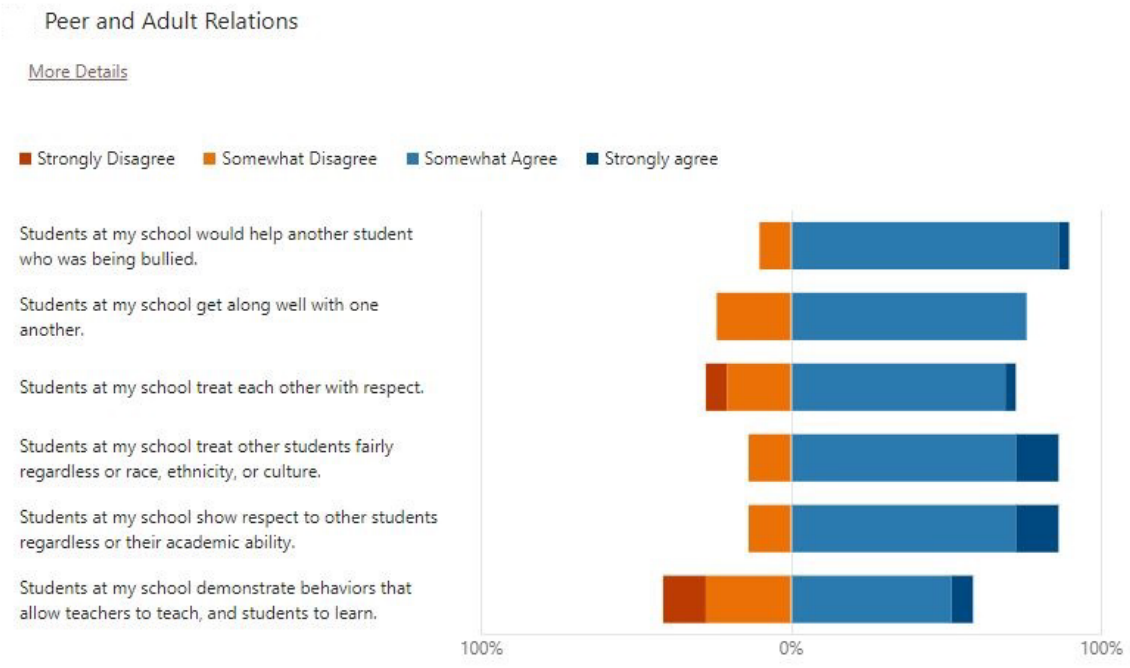
34.5%, believe the school building is well-maintained, with 20.7% strongly agreeing and 13.8% somewhat agreeing. However, there was a significant majority expressing dissatisfaction, with 41.4% somewhat disagreeing and 24.1% strongly disagreeing, indicating concerns about the maintenance of the school building. When looking at the condition of instructional materials there were mixed openings. While 62.1% view the materials positively, 37.9% were dissatisfied, suggesting a need for updating and improving these resources. A majority, 31% strongly agreed and 48.3% somewhat agreed that teachers keep their classrooms clean and organized, with only a small portion, 20.6%, disagreeing. Most respondents, 89.7%, believe that teachers make an effort to keep their school building and facilities clean, with only a 10.3% disagreeing to that query. There was general satisfaction with the efforts to maintain cleanliness and organization within classrooms and school facilities. There were significant concerns about the overall maintenance of the school building and the condition of instructional materials. These issues highlight areas that need attention to improve the physical environment of the school. Ensuring that the physical environment is well maintained can remove potential barriers that can limit student attendance.

The fifth subgroup asks the participant about the peer and adult relations inside their building. Questions 21-26 focus on the perceptions of the participants of how student interact with their peers and the adults inside the school building. Figure 19 shows how the teachers responded to this group of six questions. The first question asked if a student at their school would help another student who was being bullied. For this question 3.4% strongly agreed, 86.2% somewhat agreed, 10.3% somewhat disagreed and 0% strongly disagreed. Next the participants were asked if students at their school get

along well with one another; 75.9% somewhat agreed and 24.1% somewhat disagreed. The following question asked it students at their school treat each other with respect. In response to the question, 3.4% strong agreed, 69% somewhat agreed, 20.7% somewhat disagreed, and 6.9% strongly disagreed. When asked if students at their school treat other student fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture the responses were that 13.8% strongly agreed, 72.4% somewhat agreed, and 13.8% somewhat disagreed. The fifth question asked if student at their school show respect to other students regardless of their academic ability. In response to that question 13.8% strongly agreed, 72.4% somewhat agreed, and 13.8% somewhat disagreed. The final question in the section about peer and adult relations asked if students at their school demonstrate behaviors that allow teacher to teacher, and students to learn. In response to that question 6.9% strongly agreed, 51.7% somewhat agreed, 27.6% somewhat disagreed, and 13.8% strongly disagreed.

Figure 19

School Climate Survey: School Personnel – Peer and Adult Relations



The information in the peer and adult relations showed a detailed view of how school personnel perceive peer and adult relations within their school building, focusing on student interactions with peers and adult. When asked if student would help a peer who was being bullied, a small portion 3.4% strongly agree, while a vast majority of 86.2% somewhat agree. However, 10.3% somewhat disagree, indicating a significant majority believe students would assist a bullied peer, but there is some doubt that exists.

When looking at whether students get along well with each other, 75.9% somewhat agreed and 24.1% somewhat disagreed. This suggests a general positive view of students' interactions, though a quarter of respondents see room for improvement. When asked about mutual respect among students 3.4% strongly agreed, 69% somewhat agreed, 20.7% somewhat disagreed, and 6.9% strongly disagreed that students treat each other with respect. The majority sees respect among students, but there's notable disagreement indicting issues to address. When asked if students treat each other fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture, 13.8% strongly agreed, 72.4% somewhat agreed, and 13.8% somewhat disagreed. This reflects a mostly positive view on fairness, there is some concern about inequality. There is generally a respectful environment based on the responses on whether students show respect to others regardless of academic ability, with 13.8% strongly agreed, 72.4% somewhat agreed, and 13.8% somewhat disagreed. When asked if a student demonstrate behaviors conducive to teacher and learning, 6.9% strongly agreed, 51.7% somewhat agreed, 27.6% somewhat disagreed, and 13.8% strongly disagreed. While over half see positive behavior, a significant minority, 41.4%, express concerns, highlighting an area needing attending. Overall, there is generally a positive perception of peer and adult relations, with most respondents agreeing that

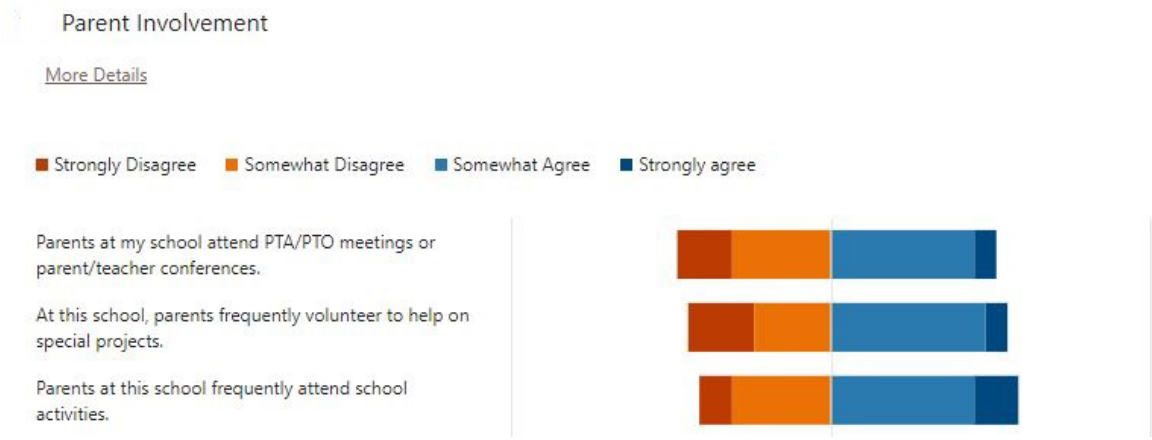
student help each other and get along well, there are notable concerns about respect, fairness, and behavior that impact the learning environment. These issues suggest specific areas where interventions could improve student interaction and the overall school climate. Avoiding bullying behavior is identified as one of the contributing factors to chronic absenteeism (Freeman et al., 2020).

The final three questions, 26-29, ask the staff about their perceptions regarding parent involvement in their child education. The first of the last three survey questions asked teachers if parents at their school attend PTA/PTO meetings or parent/teacher conferences. The survey responses were that 6.9% strongly agreed, 44.8% somewhat agreed, 31% somewhat disagreed, and 17.2% strongly disagreed. The second question asked if at their school, parents frequently volunteer to help on special projects. The participants responded that 6.9% strongly agreed. 48.3% somewhat agreed, 24.1% somewhat disagreed, and 20.7% strongly disagreed. The final question of the survey asked if parents at their school frequently attend school activities. The participants responded were 13.8% strongly agreed, 44.8% somewhat agreed, 31% somewhat disagreed, and 10.3% strongly disagreed.

The information in Figure 20 detailed staff perceptions regarding parent involvement in their child's education within the school. Parental involvement in PBIS is essential for creating a consistent and supportive environment for student, both at school and at home. Enhancing communication and having a positive parent involvement can address another barrier of chronic absenteeism (Freeman et al., 2020). Having this parent involvement can contribute to making PBIS more effective and sustainable.

Figure 20

School Climate Survey: School Personnel – Parental Involvement



When asked if parents attend PTA/PTO meetings or parent/teacher conferences, only 6.9% of the staff strongly agreed, while 44.8% somewhat agreed. On the other hand, 31% somewhat disagreed, and 17.2% strongly disagreed. This suggests that a significant portion of the staff feel parent attendance at these events are lacking. When looking at parent involvement in special projects, 6.9% of the staff strongly agreed that parent frequently volunteer, and 48.3% somewhat agreed. However, 24.1% somewhat disagreed, and 20.7% strongly disagreed, indicating that while nearly half of the staff see some level of volunteering, there is also a notable portion who feel parent participation is insufficient. On the question of whether parents frequently attend school activities, 13.8% of the staff strongly agreed, and 44.8% somewhat agreed. Meanwhile, 31% somewhat disagreed, and 10.3% strongly disagreed. This mixed response indicates that although many staff members see some parental attendance at school activities, a significant minority feel that it is not as frequently as it should be. The data indicates a mixed perception of parent involvement in school-related activities. While a portion of the staff

feels positively about parent participation, there are considerable concerns about the frequency and consistency of this involvement.

Attendance Data

This next section will look at the attendance data for Dana Elementary and State Street Elementary for the 2022-2023 and the 2023-2024 school years. Figure 21 shows the enrollment data for the two schools over the two school years. From the 2022-2023 school year to the 2023-2024 school year Dana Elementary saw an increase in enrollment in kindergarten, first, and fourth grade. It had a slight decrease in third grade and no change in second grade. State Street also saw increases in enrollment in first, second, and fourth grade with decreases in kindergarten and third grade. There are slight changes in the enrollment annually but the overall enrollment for the Wyoming Valley West School District has remained steady.

Figure 21

Enrollment Data 2022-2023 & 2023-2024 School Years

Dana Elementary				State Street Elemtary			
2022-2023 SY		2023-2024 SY		2022-2023 SY		2023-2024 SY	
	Enrollment		Enrollment		Enrollment		Enrollment
	Students		Students		Students		Students
KG	93	KG	109	KG	175	KG	171
1	93	1	100	1	232	1	242
2	101	2	101	2	199	2	237
3	106	3	104	3	243	3	206
4	97	4	113	4	200	4	225

When reviewing the attendance for the two schools the researcher examined excused and unexcused absences. There were multiple categories that were used to determine what type of excused absence was being used. The different types of excused absences were bereavement, family emergency, field trips, health – parent note, health – doctor note, illness, principal approved, religious, and Google Classroom. The illness

excuse is used when the school nurse sends a student home and informs parents how many days they should be out of school and the Google Classroom was used in the 2022-2023 school year for students who had been sent home for testing positive for COVID-19 but completed makeup work utilizing Google Classrooms. Unexcused absences only has the one category. The completed chart of excused and unexcused absences with all subcategories can be found in Appendix G.

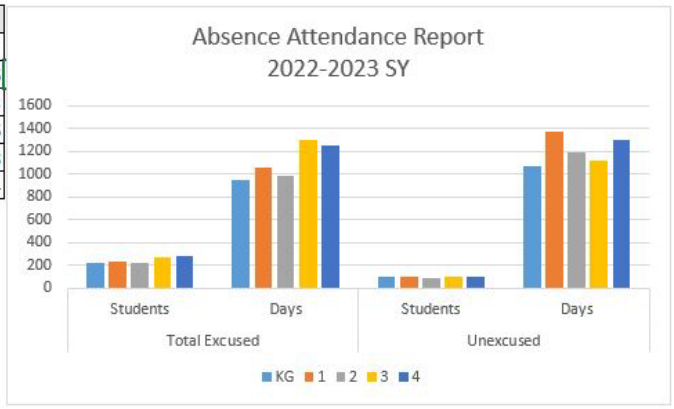
When reviewing the attendance data from Dana Elementary the first thing the researcher noticed was the significant decrease in the number of excused absences for the school. The subcategory of illness saw the largest decrease. This was attributed to students being held out of school due to the school district COVID-19 policy, as they were following guidelines from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control.

Figure 22 compares the attendance data for Dana Elementary between the 2022-2023 school year and the 2023-2024 school year. The changes in the other subcategories showed an increase in bereavement days, an increase in family emergency days, a decrease in field trip days, a decrease in health – parent notes, a decrease in heath – doctors' notes, a slight increase in religious days, and no Google Classroom days were used in the 2023-2024 school year. The number of unexcused days used by students decreased by about 90 days for 1st grade students and by almost 180 days by 3rd grade students. Specifically, 1st grade decreased from 1373 to 1262 and 3rd grade from 1118 to 942 unexcused absences reported. Kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 4th grade all showed increases in the number of unexcused days reported. Kindergarten increased from 1066 to 1286, 2nd grade from 1186 to 1273, and 4th grade from 1294 to 1315.

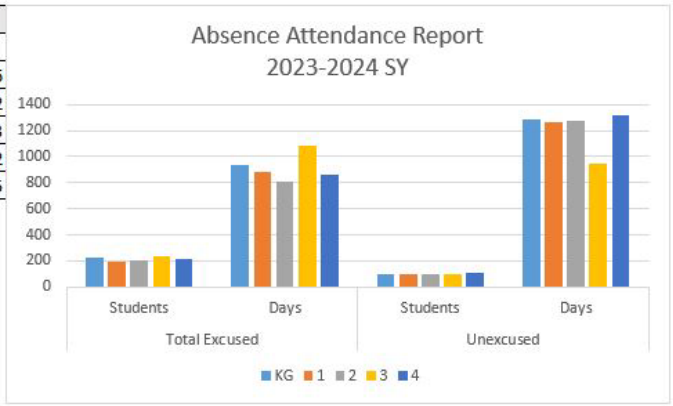
Figure 22

Attendance Data 2022-2023 & 2023-2024 School Years – Dana Elementary

22-23 SY	Total Excused		Unexcused	
	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	227	947	95	1066
1	232	1059	96	1373
2	217	991	90	1186
3	275	1298	96	1118
4	281	1254	105	1294



23-24 SY	Total Excused		Unexcused	
	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	226	931	98	1286
1	190	878	98	1262
2	200	809	94	1273
3	241	1084	99	942
4	220	858	105	1315



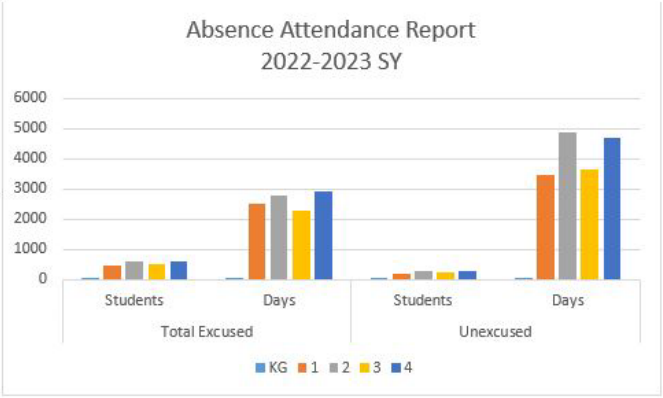
After reviewing the attendance data from State Street, the trend in the number of excused absences was the same as at Dana Elementary. State Street showed decreases of the number of total days of excused absences; KG 2376 to 2181, 2nd grade 2784 to 2234, 3rd grade 2295 to 1954, and 4th grade 2923 to 2139. Once again, some of this difference can be attributed to the policies involving the COVID-19 pandemic. The areas of excused absences at State Street also showed movement similar to what was seen at Dana Elementary. The subcategories show a decrease in the number of bereavement days, an increase in the number of family emergency days, a decrease in field trip days, a decrease in health – parent notes, decrease in health – doctors' notes, a decrease in illness.

Principal approval excuses remained the same, there was an increase in the number of religious days used, and there were no Google Classroom days used in the 23-24 school year.

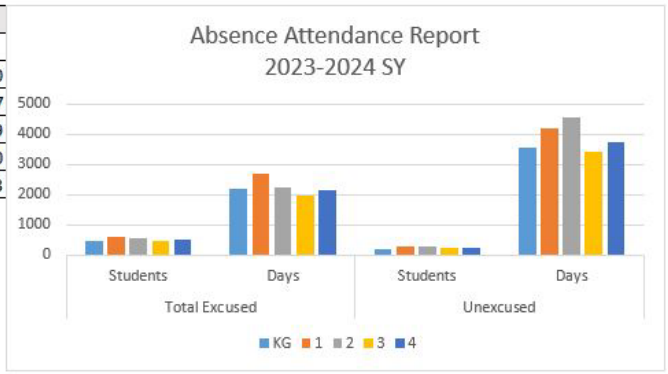
Figure 23

Attendance Data 2022-2023 & 2023-2024 School Years – State Street Elementary

22-23	Total Excused		Unexcused	
	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	506	2376	234	4088
1	477	2490	198	3477
2	600	2784	271	4865
3	514	2295	235	3671
4	603	2923	272	4716



23-24	Total Excused		Unexcused	
	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	454	2181	203	3570
1	595	2673	277	4207
2	554	2234	276	4569
3	477	1954	229	3420
4	513	2139	253	3733



The data represented in Figure 24 shows the comparison of suspension data for Dana Elementary and State Street Elementary for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. Dana Elementary only shows out-of-school suspension (OSS) data, as they do not currently have in-school suspension (ISS) available. ISS would not count as an absence for the student since they are still to report to the school. The student will remain in the designated area for the entirety of the disciplinary consequence, but will be marked present according to school attendance records.

Figure 24

Suspension Data 2022-2023 & 2023-2024 School Years

Dana Elementary			
2022-2023 SY		2023-2024 SY	
	OSS		OSS
	Students		Students
KG	0	KG	3
1	0	1	2
2	1	2	3
3	8	3	0
4	1	4	5

State Street Elemtary			
2022-2023 SY		2023-2024 SY	
	OSS		OSS
	Students		Students
KG	3	KG	1
1	23	1	1
2	16	2	16
3	26	3	20
4	46	4	34

State Street Elemtary			
2022-2023 SY		2023-2024 SY	
	ISS		ISS
	Students		Students
KG	0	KG	1
1	0	1	0
2	0	2	10
3	7	3	6
4	5	4	14

Dana Elementary showed that there were not many suspensions in the 2022-2023 school year, with 8 of the 10 total suspensions from 3rd grade students. The overall number of OSS occurrences increased at Dana Elementary with 13 total out-of-school suspensions. The majority of the suspensions were in 4th grade with five OSS. Kindergarten and 2nd grade had three suspensions each. 1st grade had two suspensions and 3rd grade had none.

State Street Elementary utilizes both OSS and ISS as a possible consequence for infractions of the school rules. State Street had a total of 114 suspensions in the 2022-2023 school year and had decreased in the 2023-2024 school year to 71 total OSS. Similar to Dana Elementary the bulk of the suspensions had occurred in 3rd and 4th grade. Twenty-six 3rd graders were suspended in 2022-2023 and 20 in 2023-2024 and 46 4th graders were suspended in 2022-2023 and 34 in 2023-2024.

The ISS data from the school shows that there was an increase in the amount of ISS from 22-23 school year to the 23-24 school year. There were increases in

kindergarten (0 to 1), 2nd grade (0 to 10), and 4th grade (5 to 14). There was a decrease in 3rd grade from (7 to 6).

Relationship to Data to Research Question 1

Research question # 1 asked, "Does a school-wide PBIS program help to decrease chronic absenteeism?" and it was addressed through the multiple means of data that was collected by the researcher. The data that was collected from the SET surveys and the School Climate Survey for School Personnel both provided insights into how a PBIS program can help to support a positive school climate.

According to the Center on PBIS, the SET is designed to assess and evaluate the essential aspects of effective school-wide behavior support throughout each academic year. The information that was collected by the researcher provided information about the PBIS program in each individual building. Twenty of 28 staff were able to identify the expectations, acronym, or motto for the SWPBIS program. Almost all taught the school rules or expectations and had given out rewards. These answers address the contributing factors for chronic absenteeism that was discussed in chapter II.

Relationship to Data to Research Question 2

Research question # 2 asked, "Does creating a positive school climate help to decrease chronic absenteeism?" It was important to look at the barriers that are creating chronic absenteeism to know what needs to be addressed. When the school climate is the barrier an survey, such as the School Climate Survey for School Personnel (SCS-SP), is helpful to understand how the school personnel feel about the school climate and where there are deficiencies.

The responses from the SCS-SP helped us to look at how teachers and teachers, and teachers and students interact with each other. Assessing the school climate and knowing where it can be improved will be helpful to address the needs of those students who are chronically absent by removing barriers.

The data support the hypothesis that creating a positive school climate though the implementation of PBIS is associated with a decrease in chronic absenteeism. Student who perceive their school environment as supportive and safe are more likely to attend regularly, thereby reducing absenteeism rates. This relationship shows the importance of fostering appositive school climate as a strategy to improve student attendance.

Relationship to Data to Research Question 3

Research question #3 asked, "Does PBIS help decrease office discipline referral resulting in out-of-school suspensions?" OSS is another barrier that is created that contributes to chronic absenteeism. When looking at the data provided by the school to determine if there was a reduction in OSS at Dana Elementary in their first year of PBIS the research found that there was not a reduction in OSS, as the total number had remained the same.

SWPBIS is a program that supports students' social-emotional development, as well as academic achievement. A decrease in the number of ODRs that result in suspension is another way of removing these barriers that continue to promote chronic absenteeism.

The data supports that PBIS reduces out-of-school suspensions by improving student behavior and creating a positive school climate. PBIS helps reduce the frequency of incidents that lead to suspensions. This relationships highlights the effectiveness of

PBIS as a tool for improving students' behavior and reducing the need for OSS disciplinary actions.

Discussion

The data analysis process outlines the structured and methodical approach to evaluate the impact of a SWPBIS on student attendance and discipline in the two elementary schools. The researcher utilized a mixed methods approach in their collection of data.

The qualitative data was collected through staff interviews and surveys designed to assess the perceptions and experiences of school personnel with PBIS being implemented. The SET staff interviewed focused on staff awareness of school expectations, the rewards system, identification of behaviors warranting ODRs, emergency procedures, and the behavior support team in the school. The administration interviews collected insights in place and the goals for behavior management and academic achievement. The data was analyzed to identify common themes and patterns, For instance, the majority of staff recognized school-wide expectations and participated in rewarding appropriate behaviors, suggesting a generally positive reception of the PBIS framework. Analysis also highlighted areas where awareness and implementation could be improved, such as mixed responses about the presence of a behavior support team.

The quantitative data was gathered from the school student information system, Skyward. The researcher gathered concrete data on student attendance and discipline, providing a basis comparing pre- and post-PBIS implementation outcomes for Dana Elementary and comparing that to State Street Elementary. The researcher used descriptive statistics to summarize the data in terms of means and percentages, providing

an overview of attendance and suspensions. There was also the use of inferential statistics to compare data from before and after PBIS being implemented, aiming to identify any statistically significant changes in attendance and behaviors.

The data analysis process was thorough, employing both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a holistic view of PBIS program's effectiveness. The qualitative data highlighted positive staff perceptions and identified areas needing improvement, while the quantitative data aimed to measure concrete changes in attendance and discipline.

Summary

This chapter presented a detailed analysis of the data collected to evaluate the effectiveness of PBIS in addressing chronic absenteeism and improving disciplinary outcomes in elementary schools within the Wyoming Valley West School District. The data analysis is structured to provide both qualitative and quantitative insights into the research problem.

The qualitative data collected from the surveys provided deeper insights into the challenges and successes of PBIS implementations. Teachers shared experiences and perceptions that underscored the importance of consistent support, clear communication, and targeted professional development to overcome barriers such as staff resistance and lack of buy-in.

The quantitative data showed varying levels of improvement in student attendance and disciplinary referrals following PBIS implementation. However, further analysis is required to determine the statistical significance of these changes.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data offers a comprehensive view of PBIS on student attendance and behavior. The findings suggest that while PBIS has contributed positive to some aspects of school climate and student behavior, there are still significant areas that require attention and improvement.

The findings suggest that the PBIS implementation has positive influence the school climate and student behavior. Staff generally felt supported and connected, contributing to a positive school environment. Nevertheless, there are areas for improvement, such as enhancing staff involvement and communication about PBIS initiatives.

Having comprehensively analyzed the data, Chapter V will synthesize these findings into concrete conclusions and provide actionable recommendations. This final chapter will address the research objectives aby summarizing the overall impact of PBIS on student attendance and behavior, discussing the implications for school policy and practice, and offering suggestions for future research. The insights gained from the data analysis will form the basis for these recommendations, aiming to further refine and enhance the effectiveness of PBIS in the Wyoming Valley West School District.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and Recommendations

Following the analysis and discussion of the data presented in Chapter IV, this chapter provides a synthesis of key findings by drawing conclusions based on the evidence gather throughout this study. Chapter V will delve into the implications of these findings for the educational landscape, particularly within the context of PBIS and its effectiveness in addressing chronic absenteeism and disciplinary outcomes in elementary schools.

This chapter will summarize the significant results from the data analysis, highlighting how PBIS implementation influences students' attendance and behavior. It then transitions to a discussion of the broader implication of these results for educators, administrators, and policymakers. This chapter also identifies the limitations of the study, providing a balanced view of the research findings and suggesting areas for future inquiry.

Lastly, Chapter V offers practical recommendations based on the study's conclusions. These recommendations aim to guide school districts, such as the Wyoming Valley West School District, in refining their PBIS strategies to better support student engagement and success. Through addressing these key aspects this chapter can provide a roadmap for future actions to enhance the educational experiences and outcomes of elementary school students.

Conclusions

Research Question #1: Does a School-wide PBIS program help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

The data analysis revealed a notable reduction in chronic absenteeism. The consistent application of PBIS strategies has shown to foster a more engaging and supportive school environment. This environment likely contributes to improved attendance as students feel more connected and motivated to attend school regularly. The quantitative data indicated a decrease in absentee rates, while qualitative feedback from teachers and administrators highlights the perceived positive impact of PBIS on student attendance.

Quantitative data revealed a significant reduction in the rates of chronic absenteeism following the implementation of the PBIS program. This indicated that the structured, positive, and supportive environment fostered by PBIS contributes to improved student attendance.

Additionally, qualitative feedback from teachers and administrators support these findings, highlighting that PBIS creates an engaging and motivating school environment. By addressing barriers to attendance, such as lack of engagement and negative feelings towards school, PBIS makes students more likely to attend school regularly. The research demonstrated that SWPBIS is a valuable tool in reducing chronic absenteeism, contributing to a more consistent and engaged student body.

Research Question #2: Does creating a positive school climate help to decrease chronic absenteeism?

Creating a positive school climate though the implementation of PBIS effectively decreases chronic absenteeism. Quantitative data analysis shows a significant reduction in absenteeism rates in schools utilizing PBIS, indicating a direct correlation between improved school climate and better student attendance. Teacher and administrator

feedback further supports these findings, highlighting increased student engagement, support, and connection to the school environment. The holistic approach of PBIS addresses both academic and social-emotional needs and fosters a sense of belonging and motivation among students, encouraging regular attendance.

The research revealed that specific elements of a positive school climate, such as clear expectations, consistent reinforcement of positive behavior, and supportive relationships, significantly impact attendance rates. Behavioral improvements and reduced disciplinary incidents contribute to a less disruptive classroom environment, further promoting regular attendance. Teacher perceptions of being better equipped to handle behavioral issues and the overall positive atmosphere created by PBIS emphasize its effectiveness.

Research Question #3: Does PBIS help decrease office disciple referrals resulting in out-of-school suspensions?

Implementation of PBIS has been associated with a noticeable improvement in disciplinary outcomes. Schools utilizing PBIS reported a reduction in the number of disciplinary incidents, including fewer suspensions. The data suggests that the focus on proactive behavior management, social skills training, and consistent expectations helps in mitigating negative behaviors before they escalate. Additionally, teachers reported feeling more equipped to handle behavioral issues, contributing to a more positive school climate and fewer disruptions in the learning environment.

The research provides compelling evidence that PBIS helps decrease ODRs, which in turn reduces out-of-school suspensions. Dana Elementary showed a slight increase and State Street shows a significant decrease in the numbers of OSS. This

reduction suggests that PBIS effectively addresses behavioral issues before they escalate to the level requiring administrative intervention. Teachers and administrators reported fewer instances of disruptive behavior and a more positive classroom environment, which directly contributed to these decreases.

Furthermore, qualitative feedback from school staff highlighted that the proactive and preventive strategies of PBIS play a significant roles in mitigating disciplinary issues. The structured support and continuous monitoring embedded in PBIS creates a framework where negative behaviors are promptly and effective addressed.

There are several practical applications that can be implemented by the Wyoming Valley West School District to enhance the effectiveness of PBIS and further address chronic absenteeism and disciplinary issues.

To further strengthen the positive school climate the district can plan and conduct regular professional development sessions for teachers and staff to ensure a consistent understand and implementation of PBIS strategies. Additionally, the district can engage students by introducing interactive activities that align with PBIS principles to make the school environment more welcoming and inclusive. Another step the district can take is to further develop recognition programs to reward students for good behavior and regular attendance, to foster a sense of accomplishment and belonging.

District administrators and PBIS core teams can regularly utilize data to monitor attendance and behavior patterns. This can help in identifying students at-risk of chronic absenteeism or frequent disciplinary referrals early on. Utilize targeted interventions (Tier 2) for students identified though data analysis, proving additional support where needed.

The district and the individual buildings can increase communication with parents regarding the importance of regular attendance and positive behaviors. Providing these resources and support can help families address barriers regarding attendance. The buildings can establish feedback mechanisms for students, parents, and staff to continually assess the effectiveness for PBIS strategies and make necessary adjustments.

Applying these strategies, the school district can expect to see a reduction in chronic absenteeism rates as students feel more connected and supported within the school environment. As attendance and behavior continue to improve academic performance is likely to see a positive impact, contributing to overall student success.

Fiscal Implications

As indicated in Chapter I, the estimated costs for implementing a Tier I SWPBIS program over two years can range from $5,000 to $10,000. The workshop for the core team and an approximate cost of $4000 included two half-day training sessions. This training was done by the PBIS facilitator from the Luzerne Intermediate Unit #18. The school district did compensate the teachers $49 per hour to have this training outside of their regularly contracted hours. The six core team members from Dana Elementary cost the district $882 per workshop.

The regularly scheduled core team meetings and staff meetings have no additional costs as they are incorporated into the contracted school year. There was an estimated annual costs for SWIS, which was $400. SWIS was not used by the school district, as almost of the same data was able to be tracked using the current learning management system, Skyward.

An initial fund amount was discussed and set at $5000. This will be used for supplies, posters, rewards, and program rollout activities. These initial funds were set aside from the individual school student activity fund accounts. There is no current line item in the district budget for PBIS. The funds for the program will come from school-based fund raising events, donations from community partners and the school parent-teacher organization, and the PBIS core team applying for a grant.

Adequate funding ensures that necessary training, resources, and support systems are in place for the program running successfully. Proper financial support can facilitate ongoing professional development and leadership training. Without sufficient funding, the program might face challenges in fully implementing the PBIS framework.

Limitations

The research design, methodology and external factors significantly influenced the interpretation of the researcher's findings in various ways. Firstly, the mixed-methods approach combing both qualitative and quantitative data provided a holistic perspective but also presented challenges in aligning and integrating different data types. For instance, qualitative insights from teacher surveys enriched the understanding of PBIS impacts on school climate but required careful triangulation with quantitative absenteeism and disciplinary data to draw clear conclusions.

Next, the methodology of data collection through surveys introduced potential biases such as self-reporting bias, where teachers might overstate the effectiveness of PBIS due to personal or professional stakes. This necessitated cautious interpretation and cross-validation with objective measure like attendance records and suspension data.

External factors also played a critical role. Variations in school funding, community engagement, and unforeseen events like the COVID-19 pandemic could have skewed results. For example, pandemic-related disruptions likely affected attendance patterns independently of PBIS interventions, complicating the assessment of PBIS's effectiveness. Additionally, differences in school environments and administrative support levels impacted the fidelity of PBIS implementation, thus influencing outcomes. These factors underscored the importance of contextualizing findings within broader environmental and systemic context to accurately gauge the intervention's overall impact.

Recommendations for Future Research

The study concluded that while PBIS was effective in reducing absenteeism, its impact of disciplinary referrals was less profound. To address this, future plans will focus on refining behavioral management strategies and providing targeted support to students with frequent disciplinary issues.

While this study provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of PBIS, there are several areas that warrant closer examination. Future researchers should explore the long-term impact of PBIS on student behavior and academic performance. Investigating the role of teacher perceptions and attitudes towards PBIS in its implementation could provide deeper insights.

The effectiveness of PBIS in reducing chronic absenteeism and disciplinary issues can be enhanced through several future plans. Ongoing professional development for teachers to deepen their understanding of PBIS strategies and enhance their skills in implementing these practices effective can further strengthen the overall effectiveness of the program. The importance of parent and community engagement is another crucial

component to effective PBIS. Future plans on developing initiatives to increase parent involvement through regular communication and workshops can assist in removing barriers of absenteeism. There is also a need to expand and diversify the rewards system to help ensure that different students' interests and motivations are being met to increase engagement in the program.

Future research should also explore the long-term impact of PBIS on student behavior and academic performance. This can provide further insight on the effectiveness of PBIS in effectively reducing absenteeism in a longitudinal study. Recommendations for additional research questions can ask, "How does long-term PBIS implementation affect student academic outcomes?" Or "how can PBIS strategies be adapted to better address diverse students' needs?" These questions can guide subsequent studies to help to ensure a continuous improvement process for PBIS implementation.

Summary

Chapter V highlights the results of the study, showing how PBIS implementation influences students' attendance and behavior. It discusses broader implication for educations, administrators, and policy makers while identifying the study's limitations. Practical recommendations are provided for the school district to refine PBIS strategies to better support student engagement and success. This chapter also addresses the fiscal implications of implementing PBIS and suggests ways to enhance its effectiveness through regular professional development, improved data collection, increased parental involvement, and expanded the rewards system.

In conclusion, this chapter stresses the importance of PBIS in fostering a positive school climate and reducing chronic absenteeism and disciplinary issues. PBIS helps

create an engaging and motivating atmosphere for students, leading to improved attendance and behavior. The researcher provides a roadmap for future actions for the district to continue to promote its PBIS program. This can enhance the educational experiences and outcomes of elementary school students, which can contribute to their overall success.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board
250 University Avenue
California, PA 15419
instreviewboard@calu.edu
Melissa Sovak, Ph.D.

Dear Angelo DePrimo,

Please consider this email as official notification that your proposal titled "Positive Impact of PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) on regular attendance in grades K-4" (Proposal #PW23-012) has been approved by the Pennsylvania Western University Institutional Review Board as submitted.

The effective date of approval is 08/21/2023 and the expiration date is 08/20/2024. These dates must appear on the consent form.

Please note that Federal Policy requires that you notify the IRB promptly regarding any of the following:

(1) Any additions or changes in procedures you might wish for your study (additions or changes must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented)

(2) Any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects

(3) Any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in (2).

(4) To continue your research beyond the approval expiration date of 08/20/2024, you must file additional information to be considered for continuing review. Please contact instreviewboard@calu.edu

Please notify the Board when data collection is complete.

Regards,

Melissa Sovak, PhD.

Chair, Institutional Review Board

Appendix B

Online Consent Letters

PennWest University
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

Title of Study: Positive impact of PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) on regular attendance in grades K-4

Principal Investigator: Angelo DePrimo

KEY INFORMATION

You are being asked by Angelo DePrimo to participate in a research study, taking part in the study is voluntary, and you may stop at any time.

The purpose of the study is to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS will positively affect regular student attendance. The Wyoming Valley West School District has identified regular attendance as a priority issue. Absenteeism has been an issue for many school districts over the years, but there seems to be a decrease in the regular attendance of students' post-pandemic. Literature defines school climate as one of the contributing factors to absenteeism. This research is needed to know and understand if creating a positive school climate through PBIS will positively affect regular student attendance.

The areas of research that need to be reviewed in the concentration of attendance would be reasons for absenteeism and chronic absenteeism. There is also a need to look at absenteeism in the post-pandemic years and a look at the history of attendance in the school setting.

In this study, you will be presented with/asked to complete the School Climate Survey for School Personnel. It will take you about 20 minutes to complete the survey. It will be necessary to complete the survey at least two times during the 2023-2024 school year. You will also be asked to complete the Administrator Interview Guide of the School wide Evaluation Tool. It will take you about 20 minutes to complete the guide. It will be necessary to complete the survey at least two times during the 2023-2024 school year. You will also be asked to complete Tier 1: Universal SWPBIS Features of the Tiered Fidelity Index version 2.1. It will take you about 30 minutes to complete this inventory.

The potential risks during the study are personal inconvenience of time and effort in completing the surveys. If you experience any emotional or spiritual effects, I can work with the Wyoming Valley West School District to recommend counseling services.

There are no direct benefits to participants from the research. It will help researchers better understand how this research relates to education, student attendance, and school climate.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

The online study is completely anonymous; you will not be asked to give any information that could identify you (e.g., name). The survey is NOT linked to IP addresses. Any information provided to obtain extra credit will NOT be connected to your responses to the survey. Individual responses will not be presented, just the aggregated data.

Remember, taking part in this study is voluntary. If, while taking the survey, you feel uncomfortable or no longer want to participate, you may stop at any time. To stop taking the survey, you may close the browser to completely exit the survey.

There are no consequences if you decide to stop participating in this study.

There is no identifiable information collected from you during this study; all other information from this study will be confidential within local, state, and federal laws. The PennWest University Institutional Review Board (IRB) may review the research records. The study's results may be shared in aggregate form at a meeting or journal, but your personal information will not be revealed. Records from this study will be kept by Angelo DePrimo for at least three (3) years after the study is complete.

Non-identifiable information collected as a part of this research could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without your additional informed consent.

If you have questions about the research or a research-related injury, you can contact Angelo DePrimo at dep6149@pennwest.edu. If you have a question about your rights as a research participant that you need to discuss with someone, you can contact the PennWest University Institutional Review Board at InstReviewBoard@Pennwest.edu. If you would like a copy of this informed consent, please print this screen, or contact Angelo DePrimo at dep6149@pennwest.edu.

By clicking on the “I agree” box and continuing with the survey, you have acknowledged that you have read the entire informed consent and are at least 18 years of age. Also, you acknowledge that you agree to participate in the study and have the right not to answer any or all of the questions in the survey. Finally, you understand your participation is completely voluntary, and you may quit the study at any time without penalty.

PennWest University
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

Title of Study: Positive impact of PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) on regular attendance in grades K-4

Principal Investigator: Angelo DePrimo

KEY INFORMATION

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PennWest University

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

Title of Study: Positive impact of PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) on regular attendance in grades K-4

Principal Investigator: Angelo DePrimo

KEY INFORMATION

You are being asked by Angelo DePrimo to participate in a research study, taking part in the study is voluntary, and you may stop at any time.

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PennWest University

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Appendix C

District Letter of Approval

Wyoming Valley West School District
450 North Maple Avenue, Kingston, PA 18704-3683
Phone: (570) 288-6551 - Fax (570) 288-1564

Office of the Superintendent

July 10, 2023

719 N Irving Ave
Scranton PA 18510

Dear Mr. DePrimo:

I am pleased to write a letter in support of your doctoral capstone project entitled, "Positive impact of PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) on regular attendance in grades K-4." The proposed research has significant value to addressing the regular attendance of elementary school students. The Wyoming Valley West School District has identified regular attendance as a priority issue as part of the district comprehensive plan.

I have reviewed the project proposal and understand the following related to participation:

- Access to and cooperation with administration and the PBIS team at Dana Elementary.
- Teacher participation involving completion of pre- and post intervention surveys.
  - Participation will be voluntary, and teachers may withdraw from the study at any time.
- Data collected will be kept confidential and kept secure via electronic files.
- Permission to publish district name.

Please accept this letter as my formal consent and support of the district's participation in the proposed research project.

Sincerely,

Mr. Dave Tosh

Appendix D

School Climate Survey: School Personnel

School Climate Survey: School Personnel

Please answer all of the questions or your answers won't be recorded, but you can mark "I prefer not to answer" if you don't want to answer a question about you.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Primary job classification.

☐ Teacher ☐ Administrator ☐ Certified Staff Member
☐ Classified/Other Staff Member ☐ I prefer not to answer

Primary grade taught.

☐ K ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8
☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12 ☐ I prefer not to answer.

Area(s) taught. *(mark all that apply)*

☐ Science ☐ ELA ☐ Social Studies
☐ Connections (e.g., art, PE, band, music)
☐ Math ☐ Special Education
☐ Other, please specify: _____
☐ I prefer not to answer

Years of work experience.

☐ 0-5 years ☐ 6-10 years ☐ 11-15 years
☐ More than 15 years ☐ I prefer not to answer.

Highest degree earned.

☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Master's Degree
☐ Educational Specialist Degree ☐ Doctoral Degree
☐ Other, please specify: _____
☐ I prefer not to answer.

What is your gender identity?

☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Non-binary, transgender or other
☐ I prefer not to answer

What is your ethnicity?

☐ Hispanic or Latino/a/e ☐ Not Hispanic or Latino/a/e
☐ I prefer not to answer

What is your race? (*mark all that apply)*

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native
☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American
☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
☐ White
☐ I prefer not to answer

Beyond that, is there another ethnic group with which you identify?

☐ Ethnic Group: _____
☐ I prefer not to answer.

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Staff Connections

1. **I feel supported by other teachers at my school.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

2. **I get along well with other staff members at my school.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

3. **I feel like I am an important part of my school.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

4. **I enjoy working in teams (e.g. grade level, content) at my school.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

5. **I feel like I fit in among other staff members at my school.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

6. **I feel connected to the teachers at my school.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Structure for Learning

7. **Teachers at my school frequently recognize students for good behavior.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

8. **Teachers at my school have high standards for achievement.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

9. **My school promotes academic success for all students.**
   ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

10. **All students are treated fairly by the adults at my school.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

11. **Teachers at my school treat students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

12. **Teachers at my school work hard to make sure that students do well.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

School Safety

13. **I feel safe at my school.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

14. **I have been concerned about my physical safety at school.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

15. **If I report unsafe or dangerous behaviors, I can be sure the problem will be taken care of.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

16. **I feel safe when entering and leaving my school building.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Physical Environment

17. **My school building is well-maintained.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

18. **Instructional materials are up to date and in good condition.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

19. **Teachers at my school keep their classrooms clean and organized.**
    ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

20. **Teachers make an effort to keep the school building and facilities clean.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Peer and Adult Relations

21. **Students at my school would help another student who was being bullied.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

22. **Students at my school get along well with one another.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

23. **Students at my school treat each other with respect.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

24. **Students at my school treat other students fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

25. **Students at my school show respect to other students regardless of their academic ability.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

26. **Students at my school demonstrate behaviors that allow teachers to teach, and students to learn.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Parent Involvement

27. **Parents at my school attend PTA meetings or parent/teacher conferences.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

28. **At this school, parents frequently volunteer to help on special projects.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

29. **Parents at this school frequently attend school activities.**
☐ Strongly Disagree ☐ Somewhat Disagree ☐ Somewhat Agree ☐ Strongly Agree

Appendix E

School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET): Administrator Interview Guide

Administrator Interview Guide

Let's talk about your discipline system

1) Do you collect and summarize office discipline referral information? Yes No f no, skip to #4.
2) What system do you use for collecting and summarizing office discipline referrals? (E2)
   a) What data do you collect?
   b) Who collects and enters the data?
3) What do you do with the office discipline referral information? (E3)
   a) Who looks at the data?
   b) HOW often do you share it With Other Staff?
4) What type of problems do you expect teachers to refer to the Office rather than handling in the classroom/ specific setting? (02)
5) What is the procedure for handing extreme emergencies in the building (i.e. stranger with a gun)? (04)

Let's talk about your school rules or motto

6) DO you have school rues or a motto? Yes NO If no, skip to # I O
7) How many are there? _____
8) What are the rules/motto? (B4, B5)
9) What are they called? (B4, B5)
10) Do you acknowledge students for doing well socially? Yes No If no, skip to # 12.
11) What are the social acknowledgements/ activities/ routines called (student of month, positive referral, letter home, stickers, high 5's)? (C2, C3)

Do you have a team that addresses school-wide discipline? If no, skip to # 19

12) Has the team taught/reviewed the school-wide program with staff this year? (B3) Yes No
13) Is your school-wide team representative of your school staff? (F3) Yes No
14) Are you on the team? (F5) Yes No
15) How often does the team meet? (F6)
16) DO you attend team meetings consistent y? (F5) Yes NO 17) Who is your team leader/facilitator?
17) Does the team provide updates to faculty on activities & data summaries? (E-3, F7) Yes NO lf yes, how often?_____
18) Do you have an out-of-school liaison In the state or district to support you on positive behavior support systems development? (C2) Yes No lf yes, who? _____
19) What are your top 3 school improvement goa s? CFI)
20) Does the school budget contain an al ocated amount of money for bui ding and maintaining school-wde behavioral support? (GI) Yes No

Appendix F

School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET): Additional Interviews

Additional Interviews

Staff Interview Questions

1. What are the _____(school rules, high 5's, 3 bee's)? (35) (Define what the acronym means)
2. Have you taught the school rules/behavioral expectations this year? (B2)
3. Have you given out any_____ since _____? (C3)
    a. (Rewards for appropriate behavior) (2 months ago)
4. What types of student problems do you or would you refer to the office7 (02) 5)
5. What is the procedure for dealing with a stranger with a gun? (D4)
6. Is there a school-wide team that addresses behavioral support in your bu' ding?
7. Are you on the team?

Team Member Interview Questions

1. Does your team use discipline data to make decisions? (E4)
2. Has your team taught/reviewed the school-wide program with staff this year? (B3)
3. Who is the team leader/facilitator? (F4)

Revised NKS

Appendix G

Complete Attendance with Absence Reasons

Dana Elementary

2022-2023 School Year

22/23	Bereavement		Family Emergency		Field Trip		Health - Parent Note	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	5	13	1	1	4	25	85	479
1	8	27	1	2	11	58	71	401
2	2	2	2	2	8	40	83	436
3	4	9	4	4	11	72	93	552
4	3	5	3	4	16	74	106	643
22/23	Health - Doctor Note		Illness		Principal Approval		Religious	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	73	330	46	83	12	15	1	1
1	76	420	60	146	5	5	0	0
2	75	398	41	104	5	5	0	0
3	84	506	53	116	21	21	1	1
4	87	379	53	120	7	7	1	1
22/23	Google Classroom		Total Excused		Unexcused			
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days		
KG	0	0	227	947	95	1066		
1	0	0	232	1059	96	1373		
2	1	4	217	991	90	1186		
3	4	17	275	1298	96	1118		
4	5	21	281	1254	105	1294		

2023-2024 School Year

23/24	Bereavement		Family Emergency		Field Trip		Health - Parent Note	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	5	7	1	1	2	10	82	368
1	4	10	1	7	7	65	73	388
2	6	13	4	10	3	15	80	378
3	8	21	5	11	5	40	91	593
4	7	18	0	0	2	7	85	423
23/24	Health - Doctor Note		Illness		Principal Approval		Religious	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	80	433	46	94	6	14	4	4

1	73	356	27	45	4	6	1	1
2	74	333	30	57	3	3	0	0
3	83	339	40	71	6	6	3	3
4	77	308	42	91	5	9	2	2

23/24	Google Classroom		Total Excused		Unexcused	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	0	0	226	931	98	1286
1	0	0	190	878	98	1262
2	0	0	200	809	94	1273
3	0	0	241	1084	99	942
4	0	0	220	858	105	1315

State Street Elementary

2022-2023 School Year

22/23	Bereavement		Family Emergency		Field Trip		Health - Parent Note	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	3	6	16	25	11	68	187	1294
1	1	4	7	9	10	68	174	1089
2	4	20	9	10	13	91	224	1350
3	2	3	16	17	14	78	187	1130
4	4	11	18	32	11	68	219	1434

22/23	Health - Doctor Note		Illness		Principal Approval		Religious	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	164	740	114	228	11	15	0	0
1	158	1041	123	270	4	9	0	0
2	202	1021	133	248	12	28	0	0
3	160	786	118	228	11	21	0	0
4	201	1034	128	240	11	58	0	0

22/23	Google Classroom		Total Excused		Unexcused	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	0	0	506	2376	234	4088
1	0	0	477	2490	198	3477
2	3	16	600	2784	271	4865
3	6	32	514	2295	235	3671
4	11	46	603	2923	272	4716

2023-2024 School Year

23/24	Bereavement		Family Emergency		Field Trip		Health - Parent Note	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	0	0	3	3	3	22	165	941
1	2	6	6	6	10	45	209	1141
2	0	0	5	5	5	47	218	1056
3	3	5	3	3	12	56	178	883
4	1	4	4	4	7	43	193	1053
23/24	Health - Doctor Note		Illness		Principal Approval		Religious	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	153	885	118	261	12	69	0	0
1	206	1116	151	315	11	44	0	0
2	190	840	117	212	19	74	0	0
3	163	746	109	227	8	23	0	0
4	175	777	123	240	10	18	0	0
23/24	Google Classroom		Homebound		Total Excused		Unexcused	
	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days	Students	Days
KG	0	0	0	0	454	2181	203	3570
1	0	0	0	0	595	2673	277	4207
2	0	0	0	0	554	2234	276	4569
3	0	0	1	11	477	1954	229	3420
4	0	0	0	0	513	2139	253	3733