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Implementing School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS): School Counselors' Perceptions of Student Outcomes, School Climate, and Professional Effectiveness

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Implementing School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS):
School Counselors’ Perceptions of Student Outcomes, School Climate, and Professional Effectiveness
Margaret D. Donohue, Ph.D. 2014

Abstract

School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a framework utilized by more than 18,000 schools in the United States. Middle and high school SWPBIS leadership teams are usually composed of administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, special educators and general educators. The purpose of this study was to understand middle and high school counselors’ perceptions of the impact of SWPBIS. The Delphi methodology was used to gain agreement on changes to student outcomes, school climate, and school counselor effectiveness. A knowledgeable panel of school counselors from schools that are implementing SWPBIS with high fidelity identified changes to student outcomes, school climate, and implications for school counselor effectiveness. Suggestions for school counselors and pre-service school counseling curriculum are provided based on the results of this study.
Implementing School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS):
School Counselors’ Perceptions of Student Outcomes, School Climate, and Professional Effectiveness

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B.A., Georgetown University, 1989
Ed. M., Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1994

A Dissertation
Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at the University of Connecticut
2014
Implementing School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS):
School Counselors’ Perceptions of Student Outcomes, School Climate,
and Professional Effectiveness

Presented by
Margaret Dowley Donohue, Ed. M.

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2014
This dissertation is dedicated to my family.

First and foremost to my husband, John, for your steadfast support
and ability to always make me laugh through thick and thin.

To my children, Isabella and Joey, for your enthusiasm, natural curiosity,
awe-inspiring promise, and “Go, Mom!” attitude.

To my parents, Michael and Sandy Dowley, for your belief in me from the very
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To my in-laws, Belle, Jerry, and all of the Donohues, for your love and support.

In memory of Clare Sullivan Donohue who was a gifted educator, mother,
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Chapter I
Statement of the Problem

Introduction

School disciplinary issues intrude on the learning process for all students (Larmont, 2013). Multiple studies indicate a sharp increase in school infractions that result in suspension and expulsion (Skiba & Peterson, 2000; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Wald & Losen, 2003). Suspension and expulsion rates are disturbingly high for male students of color, students identified with special needs, and students for whom English is not their first language (Fenning & Rose, 2007). In the most recent Civil Rights Data Collection, African-American students represented 18% of a the sample but comprised 35% of students suspended once, 46% of students suspended twice, and 39% of students expelled (Vincent et al., 2009). Traditionally, student disciplinary rates have risen steadily between 1st and 5th grades. Between 5th and 6th grades, there is a significant increase that lasts throughout middle school and peaks in the 9th grade (Vincent et al., 2009). Student disciplinary rates decline between 10th and 12th grade. Many researchers point to increased dropout rates after grade 10 for the decline in disciplinary referrals (Vincent et al., 2009). Implementation of School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) provides a systematic approach to create more equitable school-wide discipline programs while improving school climate. SWPBIS provides a framework for providing effective and efficient interventions to both prevent behavioral concerns and to address issues as they arise. Schools implementing SWPBIS report fewer in and out of school suspensions (Vincent & Tobin, 2011; Simonsen et al., 2012) and
more students indicate that they feel safe on campus (Bohanon et al., 2006, Sherrod et al. 2009).

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of implementation of SWPBIS from the standpoint of school counselors. Harnessing the perceptions of school counselors who have actively participated in the successful design and implementation of SWPBIS is significant at this juncture in the field of school counseling and for the PBIS movement. The field of school counseling has been transformed to meet the changing needs of students amidst massive reforms meant to heighten accountability and ensure equity and access to quality education for all students (Galassi & Akos, 2012). SWPBIS has gained momentum each year since 2000 with more and more schools implementing. To date, 18,277 schools have implemented which comprises 19.2% of all schools in the US (www.pbis.org). The purpose of this study was to develop a better understanding of (a) the role school counselors perceive SWPBIS plays in improving student outcomes and school climate, and (b) if and how SWPBIS implementation impacts school counselor effectiveness.

**Context of the Problem**

School counselors working in schools that have adopted SWPBIS have a unique perspective on prevention, intervention, and student outcomes. They work closely with other student support specialists to implement interventions in all three tiers of support (Hawken & Horner, 2003). Like school psychologists, school based marriage and family therapists, and school social workers, school counselors develop small group targeted interventions for students in need of Tier two support (Martens & Andreen, 2013). They also work collaboratively to address the needs of all students through Tier one and the
highest risk students who require one-on-one or Tier three support. As members of implementation teams, they participate in an extensive review of behavior practices and examine key school data prior to initiating SWPBIS. Once SWPBIS is launched, school counselors work closely with the team to monitor the effectiveness of interventions (Turnbull et al., 2002). To date, little research has been done to identify consistent themes in the experience of school counselors who have worked in schools prior to intervention, through the design and implementation phases and afterward. This study attempted to capture school counselors’ perspectives about the observable outcomes of SWPBIS on both students and their own professional effectiveness in their shifting role.

School counseling, a relatively young field struggles to clearly define and legitimize itself in the professional landscape of schools (Hatch, 2008). Too often school counselors find themselves relegated to non-counselor duties or are unable to articulate the effectiveness of their programs or interventions. This lack of legitimacy may impact a school counselor’s effectiveness (Hatch, 2008). Implementing SWPBIS is an opportunity for school counselors to provide essential leadership while fulfilling the critical elements of their role as stated by the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) Model: to advocate for the needs of ALL students. The multi-tiered prevention model, which serves as the cornerstone of SWPBIS logic, and the ASCA National Model are closely aligned.

School counselors are not the only stakeholders involved in SWPBIS implementation. Site administrators, general educators, special educators, school psychologists, school social workers, school-based marriage and family therapists, paraprofessionals, and parents (or some combination) are often part of SWPBIS leadership teams. At the high school level, students can play a central role as well.
School counselors have the skill set needed to meet the challenge of successfully implementing SWPBIS in the context of their school because they are prepared to be leaders, advocates, collaborators, and innovators (Galassi & Akos, 2012). School counselors often serve as behavior coaches or lead implementers. SWPBIS training is designed to build capacity in several key areas including behavior support, behavior planning, data collection, and team decision-making.

**Purpose of the Study**

School counselors working in fully implemented SWPBIS schools may have a shared experience. Their school counseling programs are part of a larger effort to support students in their respective schools. By asking school counselors in these schools to share their thoughts about changes to student outcomes, school climate, and their professional effectiveness, we can shed light on the perceived value of SWPBIS as an approach to reforming schools.

The purpose of this study was to uncover school counselors’ perceptions of the impact of SWPBIS implementation with fidelity on student outcomes, school climate, and their professional effectiveness in middle and high schools by addressing the following questions:

1. What student outcomes have school counselors perceived as a result of SWPBIS implementation?
2. What changes to school climate have school counselors perceived as a result of SWPBIS implementation?
3. In what ways do school counselors feel their professional effectiveness has changed as a result of implementing SWPBIS?
Chapter II Literature Review

This literature review includes a history of school counseling, the advent of School Wide Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (SWPBIS), and the role school counselors have played in SWPBIS implementation. The overlap of the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model and the ASCA National Model is explored.

The History of School Counseling

Given that the field of school counseling has gone through a tremendous metamorphosis in the past 15 years, it is important to identify key elements in the history of school counseling that have shaped the field today (Gysbers, 2004). First, to better understand how school counselors have responded to key reforms in education, it is important to look at what has defined this field. Second, the shift in role from school counselors utilized largely as gate keepers to active change agents and advocates (Hart & Gray, 1992; House & Martin, 1998; House & Hayes, 2002) in schools sheds light on how the field may be impacted by an increasing number of schools implementing multi-tiered systems of support such as SWPBIS.

The path to defining the current role of professional school counselors is marked with several transitions that parallel those made in American education. Gysbers and Henderson (2001) indicated that school counselors evolved from a position (vocational counselor) to a service (guidance counseling) to implementers of comprehensive programs (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). Because these programs are comprehensive, they are not dependent on any one specific counselor to ensure fidelity and success (Gysbers, 2004). The main components of comprehensive plans included guidance
lessons or content, an organizational framework, and resources (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001).

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) carried this change in momentum to its first meetings in 1952 (Gysbers, 2004; Erford et al., 2011). In 1953, ASCA was accepted as a division of the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA: Erford et al., 2011). The evolution of language surrounding school counseling was evolving at this time. According to Sweeney (2001), “guidance” was the term most accepted for school counselors not “school counseling” (Sweeney, 2001). Guidance conveyed the idea the “professional school counselor was primarily involved in a directive form of advice giving to the students” (Erford et al., 2011, p. 24). Thus the term “guidance counselor” has gone out of favor and has been replaced by “school counselor.” The primary difference in the two job titles signifies the emerging role as a leader and advocate who plans a program that has positive impact on all students, not just those at-risk.

In the 1970s, a paradigm shift occurred in the field from school counselors seen as being reactive as opposed to proactive (Gysbers & Henderson, 2001). The concept of guidance and counseling as a means of developing the individual student took precedence. Installing effective comprehensive guidance and counseling programs dominates the school counseling literature throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Napierkowski & Parsons, 1995; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997; Sink & McDonald, 1998). According to Sink & MacDonald, (1998), a comprehensive guidance program was the best way to organize and manage the efforts of “guidance counselors” in the US.
School counselors made efforts to create a developmental guidance program to be implemented almost as quickly as it was written.

The major shifts in programmatic and professional standards took place with the inception of the ASCA National Standards for School Counselors in 1997 and the ASCA National Model in 2003 (Dahir & Stone, 2006, 2011). Campbell and Dahir, the authors of the National Standards, challenged school counselors to clearly define their role to fit within the mission of the school. They emphasized the importance of collaborating effectively with key stakeholders such as parents, teachers, administrators and community members (Campbell & Dahir, 1997). The purpose of publishing the National Standards was to enhance the field by solidifying school counselor identity, roles and comprehensive programs (Whiston & Sexton, 1998).

As members of school-based mental health teams, school counselors can effect change through systemic efforts. There is overlap in the many different specialists working in schools. School counselors work in conjunction with school social workers, school psychologists, site-based marriage and family therapists, and outside agencies to provide mental health services to students and to support families (Laundy, Nelson, & Abucewicz, 2011). Interdisciplinary teams in schools are responsible for assessing and addressing the needs of students as well as engaging in meaningful school reform (Hatch, 2008).

The evolution of school counseling can be best understood by looking at the profession through the lens of organizational, institutional, and political theory (Hatch, 2008). Hatch explored how the school counseling profession has struggled throughout history to establish a “secure legitimate integral position in the educational mission of the
school” (Hatch, 2008, p. 2). During a period of significant school reform meant to address organizational inefficiency, institutional illegitimacy, and political devaluing, school counselors must define themselves professionally and their impact to student achievement. Hatch challenges school counselors to become:

“Policy actors” to advocate for systemic change in order to create the programs and policies needed to improve services to for students and their professional practice. Once school counselors earn social legitimacy as policy actors, they are more likely to be included in the process of decision-making. (Hatch, 2008, p. 16)

This challenge of finding a place at the decision making table is evident in policy documents. For example, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 does not mention school counselors. This policy set the stage for dramatic changes in schools; however, school counselors were not part of the reform equation.

That same year, in 2001, a group of school counseling theorists, school counselors, and experts in the field met to “reconcile the developments in the profession during the previous 100 years” (ASCA National Model, 2003, p. 10). The ASCA National Model then served as an avenue for revamping existing programs and developing new comprehensive school counseling programs (Dahir & Stone, 2011).

The ASCA Model, revised in 2005 and 2012, highlights four central themes: leadership, advocacy, collaboration, and systemic change. The relationship between these themes is characterized through the following statement:

Through application of leadership, advocacy and collaboration skills as part of a comprehensive school counseling program, school counselors promote student achievement and systemic change that ensures equity and access to rigorous
SCHOOL COUNSELORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF SWPBIS

education for every student and leads to closing achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps (ASCA National Model, 2012, p.1)

Since 2003, many studies of comprehensive school counseling programs have demonstrated increased student achievement, improved student to teacher relationship, greater student satisfaction in school, a sense of safety at school, and increased access to college and career information (McGannon, Carey, & Dimmit, 2005). However, school counselors still lack the resources and time to meet the needs of all students. High student to counselor ratios impede school counselors’ efficacy despite efforts to meet the needs of all students (Hatch, & Chen-Hayes, 2008; Lapan et al., 2012).

In 2011, The College Board Policy and Advocacy Center, Civic Enterprises and Peter D. Hart Research Associates collaborated to examine the impact and effectiveness of school counseling. A survey of 5,300 school counselors addressed current concerns in the field. Researchers surveyed the opinions of middle and high school counselors in “Counseling at the Crossroads: A National Survey of School Counselors.” On the whole, school counselors shared concerns about both the profession and the schools in which they work. According to the survey, 55% of school counselors indicated that large-scale changes are needed in schools but were unsure what that change should be. In addition, 99% of counselors believed that they should “exercise leadership in advocating to students’ access to rigorous academic preparation, as well as for other college and career readiness counseling, even if others in the school do not see counselors in this role” (College Board Policy and Advocacy Center, 2011, p. 5). Only 40% of school counselors stated that they were well utilized in schools. Perceptions of effective pre-service and ongoing training for school counselors were also questioned in the survey. Of the 5,300
school counselors polled, 73% had earned masters’ degrees and 58% had been teachers or administrators prior. Only 16% indicated that they were very well trained while 56% agreed that they were only somewhat well trained. Fully 30% of school counselors found that their training was inadequate for the daily demands of their job. Close to 75% of counselors had sought out professional development to bridge knowledge gaps in order to better meet the needs of their students. School counselors in the study supported the need for reforms including training to support collaboration among middle and high school counselors to build a 6-12 college going culture. School counselors favored the creation of accountability measure and incentives. Finally, 65% of school counselors supported data collection and dissemination on high school graduate career and college success in order to improve college-going rates over all (College Board Policy and Advocacy Center, 2011).

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

At a time when 55% of school counselors believe that large-scale changes are needed in schools, SWPBIS trainers are coaching teams as they design and implement culturally relevant whole school intervention strategies that foster academic, behavioral, social, and emotional growth for all students. The elements identified in the College Board 2011 Survey as areas of need (use of data, whole school reforms, and equitable practices) are essential aspects of the SWPBIS model.

School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a systematic approach to improving school climate and the organizational health of schools (Walker et al., 1996; Bevans et al., 2007; Bradshaw et al., 2009). Interventions are framed in three tiers of support (Sugai & Horner, 2006; Bradshaw et al., 2009; Gruman &
The first tier includes programs, approaches, and interventions shared with all students that are designed to prevent behavioral problems and promote a positive school climate. The second is composed of interventions that support small groups for a specific purpose such as social skills or anger management for students who need additional support. The tertiary tier is reserved for high risk students in need of one-on-one or intensive support to be successful in the environment (Repp & Horner, 1999; Bambara & Kern, 2005; Todd, Campbell, Meyer & Horner, 2008). These tiers are designed to help deliver behavior support through a context specific program designed by an on-site leadership team. SWPBIS is defined as:

An application of a behaviorally based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improves the fit or link between research validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occur. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining school environments that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation, etc.) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant and making desired behavior more functional (Lewis, Colvin, & Sugai, 2000, p. 7).

SWPBIS is based on Applied Behavioral Analysis theory and its first implementation was with students with significant behavior disorders in special education classrooms (Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Lindsley, 1992; Horner, 2000). Students with antisocial behaviors were often excluded from mainstream classrooms and relegated to special education classrooms rather than addressing changes to the environment that would foster positive behavior (Horner, 2000). The primary goals of SWPBIS are to
“improve student adjustment, social behavior, and academic success through methods that increase positive behavior and make problem behavior irrelevant” (Chapparro et al., 2012 p. 467). Thus, the PBIS framework allows implementation teams to make purposeful change in the environment in order to facilitate better outcomes for students (Horner, 2000).

No Child Left Behind legislation in 2001 “increased expectations that schools will provide for the educational needs of all students, and create safer learning and teaching environments” (Sugai & Horner, 2006 p. 246). In response to the Columbine shootings, the Safe Schools Act was passed and included a similar mandate. Schools were tasked with improving climate, keeping all kids safe while steadily improving test scores with fewer resources (Sugai & Horner, 2006).

In a similar vein, Response to Intervention (RtI) was recommended as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. RtI encompasses PBIS and is a multi-tiered framework designed to address both academic and behavioral development in students K-12. In current literature, RtI and PBIS are often referred to as Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) (Sugai & Horner, 2009). The key components of RtI include high quality, research-based instruction and behavioral supports in general education; scientifically research-based interventions focused specifically on individual student difficulties and delivered with appropriate intensity; use of a collaborative approach by school staff for development, implementation, and monitoring of the intervention process; universal screening; database documentation reflecting continuous monitoring of student performance and progress during intervention; documentation of parental involvement throughout the process; and systemic assessment and
documentation that interventions were implemented with fidelity (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Trolley, Haas, & Patti, 2009). Bradley, Danielson, and Doolittle (2005) explain the RtI model as:

A three-tiered prevention model, with primary intervention consisting of the general education program; secondary intervention involving fixed duration, targeted, evidence-based small group interventions; and tertiary intervention involving individualized and intensive services that may or may not be similar to traditional special education services (p. 486).

This multi-tiered logic borrowed from public health theorists, encourages school leadership teams to think systematically about making effective changes in their schools to improve outcomes for their students (Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994; Sugai & Horner, 2006). Often teams will consider implementing the smallest intervention that will have the most positive impact for students. This same logic is employed in the RtI model for academic improvement. All students are taught essential literacy and numeracy skills using sound evidence-based practices. Students are continuously assessed to ascertain whether they are mastering key concepts. Those who do not show proficiency are given target instruction in small literacy or numeracy intervention groups (Trolley et al., 2009).

Each school and district develops their own adaptation of SWPBIS and RtI in order to best meet the needs of students in their school. Thus, SWPBIS is highly contextualized (Molloy, et al. 2013). The initial design phase of MTSS requires leadership, collaboration, planning, and staff buy-in (Flannery & Sugai, 2006).

SWPBIS at Work in Schools
While implementing the SWPBIS framework, school teams are challenged to create a positive environment by utilizing explicit instruction to teach the agreed upon expected behaviors in a given area (i.e., classroom, cafeteria, hallways, playground, entering and exiting the building) (Knoff, 2000). Teams take part in extensive reflective activities and training prior to implementation. They work with technical assistants to roll out aspects of SWPBIS in their school in well-planned phases. The team continually progress monitors to ensure implementation is effective. Within the three tiers of interventions in the SWPBIS approach are different levels of intervention. Tier one behavior interventions are designed for all students and are implemented in systemic way (Sugai & Horner, 2006). When implemented with fidelity, usually 80-85% of students respond in a pro-social manner to Tier one or universal tier approaches (McIntosh et al., 2009). Tier two interventions are designed for small groups of students (10-15% of students) who require re-teaching or targeted interventions (Horner & Sugai, 2006; McIntosh et al., 2009; Mitchell, Stormont & Gage, 2011; Martens & Marteens, 2013). Targeted interventions should be evidence-based, readily accessible, and easy to implement (Mitchell et al., 2011). Tier three interventions are designed for students who continue to need supports despite Tier one and two interventions (Riffel, 2011). Students who receive Tier three supports (3-5% of students) continue to take part in Tier one programs, but need one-on-one or one-on-two or three supports to be successful in school or more intensive supports in a general education setting (McIntosh et al., 2009; Gruman & Hoelzen, 2011; Riffel, 2011).

**SWPBIS and Student Outcomes.** The most common student outcomes reviewed in the literature are Office Discipline Referrals (ODR), suspension and expulsion rates,
and standardized test scores (Luiselli, et al., 2005; Spaulding et al, 2010). Numerous empirical studies have been conducted to document the impact of SWPBIS implemented with fidelity on the overall discipline activity in a school and the academic achievement of students (Bradshaw et al., 2008, Horner et al., 2009; Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010). Bradshaw et al. (2008) employed a group-randomized control trial to better understand the impact of SWPBIS on the overall organizational health of schools. The results of this study revealed that one important school-wide outcome of SWPBIS is positive changes to school organizational health. Improved levels of organizational health in schools can also have a positive effect on student performance (Bradshaw et al., 2008). Other student outcomes substantiated by research include an increase in instructional time and improved interactions between students and teachers (Chaparro, et al., 2012).

Horner et al. (2009) conducted a randomized, control trial with elementary schools in Hawaii and Illinois over a 3-year period. Their results “provide statistically significant documentation that schools implementing SWPBIS were perceived as safer environments” (Horner et al., 2009, p. 8). The study did show lower rates of disciplinary referrals but lacked the pre-training data to calculate statistical significance (Horner et al., 2009).

Researchers continue to examine the impact of SWPBIS on students. The observable outcomes over time of ODRs, out of school suspensions (OSS), total suspensions (TS) and student achievement on standardized tests are important outcome measures. One study reviewed behavior data from 428 Illinois schools showed lower rates of office discipline referrals (ODRs), out of school suspensions (OSS), and total suspensions (TS) in PBIS schools across time. The schools implementing SWPBIS with
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fidelity also reported higher standardized math scores on state standardized testing (Simonsen et al., 2012).

In short, research indicates that there are many positive outcomes generated through SWPBIS implementation including increased attendance (Freeman, 2013), increased student achievement (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Simonsen et al., 2012), improved school climate (Lippe, 2010; Horner et al., 2009; Bradshaw, Koth, Thorton, & Leaf, 2008), and an increase in instructional time (Horner et al., 2005). At the same time, implementation of SWPBIS diminishes the number of office discipline referrals (Bohanon et al., 2006; Sherrod et al., 2009; Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010), in and out of school suspensions (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010), and out placements for special education students (Scott & Barrett, 2004). Over time, effective SWPBIS also decreases the need for Tier two and Tier three interventions (Bohanon et al., 2006). Lastly, implementation of SWPBIS has a positive effect on the overall organizational health of schools (Bradshaw et al., 2008). According to Luiselli et al., (2005) large-scale interventions targeting “positive social and character development” (p. 185) is likely to improve the school climate as well.

**High School SWPBIS.** Implementation of SWPBIS is most demanding on the high school level and represents the greatest challenge to implementers including school counselors. This study includes school counselors working on implementation teams in both middle and high schools. The student outcomes of PBIS that have been widely reported in the literature include: increased student achievement, decreased office discipline referrals, and decreased suspension/expulsion rates (Bohanon et al., 2006; Sherrod et al., 2009; Simonsen et al., 2012). Since effective implementation of SWPBIS
in secondary schools is more challenging, there are fewer high schools with fully operational frameworks in place across the US (Bohanon-Edmonson et al., 2004). Greater numbers of elementary and middle schools have been able to document significant improvement in student outcomes due to implementing SWPBIS with fidelity. Fidelity of implementation has been defined as “the determination of how well an intervention is implemented in comparison with the original program design during an efficacy and/or effectiveness study” (O’Donnell, 2008, p. 33).

The research on SWPBIS in high schools largely documents the difficulties experienced during the implementation phase. Obstacles to implementation on high school level include:

1. A large and compartmentalized organizational structure where adults have large numbers of student contacts each day;
2. The complex and dynamic developmental stages of adolescents. Behaviors of concern at the high school level include tardiness, skipping classes, insubordination, drug/alcohol use or abuse, and bullying or harassment;
3. A pervasive “tough love” and “zero tolerance” reactive stance to problem behaviors versus the proactive and preventative approach needed to successfully implement SWPBIS;
4. Lack of agreement about what constitutes social and academic responsibility on the high school level. That is, there is a loud chorus of teachers asking “shouldn’t they know by now?” rather than an understanding that high school students have varied levels of social skills and executive functioning skills (Bohanon-Edmonson et al., 2004, p. 5).
Adolescent behavior is more complex at the high school level than at the middle school level. Behavioral transgressions carry higher risks socially, academically, and within the community (Bohanon-Edmonson et al., 2004). Students who bully, for example, may experience an initial boost in their social influence but become largely ostracized by the school community once they are reprimanded (Bohanon-Edmonson et al., 2004). Missing academic days due to suspension or expulsion may put students off track for graduation. Adolescents who engage in frequent misbehavior are more likely to drop out of school than their peers (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007; Greene, 2005; United States Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007). Students with behavior problems also have difficulty attending school regularly, keeping up with academic requirements, and fitting in socially (Flannery, Sugai & Anderson, 2006). This causes them additional stress (Flannery et al., 2006). To ensure the success of students with at-risk and high-risk behaviors, schools must utilize interventions and strategies to help students exhibit school-appropriate behaviors (Flannery et al., 2006).

If SWPBIS is to be connected to the mission of the school, site administrators need to lead the charge and effectively connect relevant SWPBIS to their vision for the school (Flannery et al., 2006). To that end, Flannery et al. stated that effective leadership requires that the principal share their vision for the future and the capacity of SWPBIS to help realize this vision (Flannery et al., 2006).

During the first decade of implementing SWPBIS in high schools, the important role that data plays in the design, implementation, and evaluation has been made clear. Flannery et al. suggested, “Practices should be linked to outcomes that are important to
the high school mission. High schools are different from elementary and middle schools because of their emphasis on postsecondary outcomes, dropout prevention, diploma achievement, and career planning” (Flannery et al., 2006, p. 18). In addition, current practices in data collection and analysis in high schools are changing (Lachat & Smith, 2005). Previously, high school administrators focused largely on student academic data. The practice of sharing discipline, school climate, high school graduation, or college going data with school staff was not common. Thus, teachers and administrators were not held accountable for these outcomes (Flannery et al., 2006). The authors suggested that sharing data from fully implemented schools to garner staff buy-in to SWPBIS implementation. These data could include, but not be limited to, the reduction of disciplinary events and time needed to manage these events, as well as school climate data, academic achievement, attendance rates, and graduation rates. Regular review of outcome data is an essential aspect of implementation on the high school level. Given the complexity of high schools as organizations, reforms of any kind are challenging and require a collaborative approach by educational professionals. School counselors often play a role in school improvement efforts. In the next section the role of the school counselor on the SWPBIS implementation team is discussed.

School Counselors’ Role on SWPBIS Leadership Teams

When forming an SWPBIS leadership team, site administrators assemble professionals who demonstrate a commitment to positive student outcomes and the school climate. School counselors have both the student “micro” view of a school and the “macro” view of systems that either promote or discourage learning (House & Sears, 2002). School counselors are trained to lead and to advocate while supporting key
reforms (House & Hayes, 2002). Recent studies illuminate the need for school staff to raise questions about equitable discipline practices (Fenning & Rose, 2007). When implemented with fidelity, SWPBIS can assist the team in clearly defining discipline practices to use for all students. Since effective school counselors work in collaboration with general educators, administrators, and other school specialists to address school-wide concerns, they can play key roles in the implementation and maintenance of SWPBIS (Martens & Andreen, 2013). Developmental guidance curriculum taught to all students is an example of a Tier one intervention. School counselors work with students in small groups and create targeted interventions for students in need. These Tier two interventions can be progress monitored to show a student’s response to the intervention. One commonly utilized Tier two intervention is Check-In Check-Out (CICO). School counselors have utilized this intervention to support and effectively improve academic performance and student behavior (Martens & Anderson, 2013). Lastly, school counselors coordinate wrap-around efforts to support students with the greatest academic and/or behavioral needs. Thus, school counselors’ three-pronged objective to support the academic, social, and career development of students is aligned with SWPBIS frameworks. The ASCA position statement on RtI (2008) indicates:

Professional school counselors are stakeholders in the development and implementation of Response to Intervention (RtI) process. Professional school counselors align with the RtI process through the implementation of a comprehensive school counseling program designed to improve student achievement and behavior. (ASCA, 2008)
Authors Ryan, Kaffenberger, and Carroll (2011) identified involvement in RtI or Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) as a new opportunity for school counselors to serve students, align with staff, and advocate for improved services for students. Ryan et al., (2011) found that implementation of RtI in one Virginia school served as an opportunity to expand the school counselor’s leadership capacity.

**Aligning the ASCA National Model and the SWPBIS Logic Model**

Implementing SWPBIS in any school elementary, middle or high school, requires the collaborative efforts of well-trained educators. School counselors follow the ASCA National Model in order to maximize their effectiveness. This chapter describes the important similarities between the ASCA National Model and the PBIS logic model. As depicted in Figure 1, the ASCA National Model and SWPBIS logic model theoretical backgrounds are closely aligned and complimentary. Both models highlight the effectiveness of using data to inform systems of support. Both focus on the need to make meaningful change in schools (systems) by reviewing data and selecting practices that provide the most desirable outcomes. The delivery system suggested in the ASCA National Model calls for guidance curriculum (Tier one), individual planning (Tier one), group counseling (Tier two), and individual counseling for students in greatest need (Tier three). The model emphasizes the need for accountability through data tracking, program audits, and careful evaluation. All three are cornerstone practices in SWPBIS. Data-driven decisions are central to both the ASCA National Model and SWPBIS logic model.

Around the outer edge of the ASCA “diamond” are the essential themes that school counselors must adopt in order to fully implement their programs: advocacy, leadership, collaboration and systemic change. It is possible that school counseling programs
operating within a SWPBIS or RtI model have a higher rate of success being maintained with fidelity (Ockerman et al., 2012). In addition, it is possible that schools with fully implemented school counseling programs are primed for expansion by implementing SWPBIS.

Figure 1. The ASCA National Model and PBIS Logic

According to the ASCA National Model (2012), a key function for school counselors in high schools is preparing and planning all students for post-secondary paths or careers. Meeting with all students to disseminate critical information is an essential component of school counselors’ responsibilities. Current practice dictates that school counselors should be reviewing relevant student data and designing intervention groups based on that data. Furthermore, efforts should be measurable over time through pre and
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posttests, academic grades, attendance rates, graduation rates, and college going rates. For example, school counselors working with 9th graders can identify all those students who would be first in their family to attend college and design a multi-faceted series of interventions that span the four years of high school to support the students’ academic growth and post secondary planning process. Key data can be used to monitor progress over time for this group in need of Tier two interventions. Likewise, students with chronic absenteeism can meet with the school counselor to address reasons for missing school, devise strategies to becoming more connected to the school community, and chart improvement over time. ASCA’s statements about systemic change are aligned with the SWPBIS literature. The model indicates, “Systemic change occurs when policies and procedures are examined and changed in light of new data. Such change happens with the sustained involvement of all critical players in the school setting, including and often led by school counselors” (ASCA National Model, p. 25).

Despite the alignment of the SWPBIS prevention and innovations in school counseling practices, there is little research in the field of school counseling on implementing SWPBIS. In 2012, Ockerman, Mason, & Hollenbeck outlined three “essential and shared components between RtI and comprehensive, developmental school counseling programs” (p. 2). These include the fact that school counselors deliver services in a tiered fashion (guidance lessons, small group counseling, and individual counseling). In addition, school counselors use data to identify trends in students’ needs and to assess the effectiveness of their interventions. Lastly, school counselors are increasingly utilizing research-based programs to address key areas of need including social skills and academic achievement (Ockerman et al., 2012).
Other efforts to conceptualize school climate begin to look at systemic change as a way to address safety concerns (Hernandez & Seem, 2002). These counselor educators focused on school context, psychosocial variables, and school behaviors and suggested that comprehensive school counseling programs were a necessary building block for a systematic school-wide effort to promote a safer and more positive school climate (Hernandez & Seem, 2002).

Tragic school shootings across the United States have kept issues of school safety in the forefront of professional dialogue for school counselors and other interventionists in schools. In the aftermath of the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut in December of 2012, key educational leaders shared these insights:

Support is critical for effective prevention. Many students and family members experience life stresses and difficulties. Depression, anxiety, bullying, incivility, and various forms of conflict need to be taken seriously. Every school should create environments where students and adults feel emotionally safe and have the capacity to support one another. Schools must also have the resources to maintain evidence-based programs designed to address bullying and other forms of student conflict. Research-based violence prevention and related comprehensive support programs should be offered, following a three-tier approach, operating at universal (school-wide), targeted (for students who are at risk), and intensive (for students who are at the highest levels of risk and need) levels (Astor, et al., 2013).
The work of school-based mental health teams, including school counselors, has taken on new significance in light of school violence. In a 2013 joint statement by ASCA, the National Association of School Psychologists, the School Social Work Association of America, the National School Resource Officers, the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of the Secondary School Principals entitled A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools, the challenge to work collaboratively to end school violence and improve school climate was clearly defined (Cowan et al., 2013). There were six main recommendations made, one of which was to support MTSS. This accompanies the authors’ recommendations to that school teams “develop evidence-based standards for district-level policies to promote effective school discipline and behavior” (Cowan et al., 2013, p 1). This is among the first statements made by a diverse authorship from a collection of national organizations endorsing MTSS as a way of improving school safety and success. At a time when school leaders are looking toward effective models to meet the diverse social, emotional, and academic needs of their students, the joint statement provides clear steps schools can take to be more successful in providing academic rigor in a safe environment.

Research conducted by school counselors and counselor educators focused on SWPBIS are comprised of small case studies (Curtis, Van Horne, Robertson, & Karvonen, 2010). Curtis et al. (2010) conducted a study of the 4-year impact of SWPBIS on one elementary school and described the following impacts on the role of the school counselor: 1. School counselors can play leadership role in SWPBIS; 2. SWPBIS provides opportunity to reach large number of students; 3. School counselors can contribute to a safer environment; 4. School counselor and principal relationships can be
strengthened by implementing SWPBIS; 5. Student concerns were addressed in a timely manner; 6. School counselor becomes more proficient in overseeing outcome data and developing effective interventions (Curtis et al. 2010).

Curtis et al. (2010) emphasized important recommendations for future research at the intersection between the role of school counselors and SWPBIS. They indicated that significant decreases in behavioral referrals impacts school counselors and likely has positive impact on student achievement and deserves further study.

One school counselor, Marcia Lathroum, identified SWPBIS as a program that has strongly influenced her thinking as an educator and professional school counselor. She noted that SWPBIS logic is closely aligned with the ASCA National Model. The three-tiered model of service delivery in SWPBIS helped Lathroum to “visualize my program around a graphic organizer and it reminds me daily that I need to be creating a plan that addresses all students and includes a differentiated approach for a variety of issues” (Erford et al., 2011, p. 35).

School counselors’ role in SWPBIS implementation likely varies site to site given multiple factors including the school leadership, years of experience, and implementation approach. The task of reflecting on disciplinary practices and improving school environment fits within the skill set of a school counseling professional. However, school counselors are not always part of the school improvement process in their schools. The following section details the systematic approach to reviewing extant literature to illuminate the role of school counselors in SWPBIS implementation specifically and their role in impacting positive student outcomes and school climate, in general.
Previous Reviews of School Counselors’ Perceptions of SWPBIS and School Counselor Impact on Student Outcomes and School Climate Literature

Most reviews of school counselor or school counseling program impact are small in scope and focus on one case study (Curtis et al., 2010), one school or a single intervention such as Student Success Skills (Luck & Webb, 2009) or Check-in Check-out (CICO; Martens & Andreen, 2013) or state-wide impact of ASCA National Model implementation (Poynton, Schumacher & Wilczneski, 2008). Carey and Dimmit (2012) brought together six studies of state-wide implementation of the ASCA National Model study conducted to quantify the impact of comprehensive school counseling programs on student outcomes. This marks a new era in school counseling literature. The scope of studies is getting larger and the findings are becoming increasingly richer as a result. As the number of schools implementing multi-tiered systems of support including RtI and SWPBIS increases steadily, it is important to review current literature about how systemic changes impact the roles of all educators, including school counselors.

Goals for systematic review of literature

A systematic review of literature was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the common characteristics of recent studies on the perceptions of school counselors about SWPBIS implementation?

2. What are the documented effects of the impact of school counselors on student outcomes?

3. What are the documented effects of the impact of school counselors on school climate?
These three themes: SWPBIS, student outcomes, and school climate will be discussed separately.

**Method**

A systematic review of five electronic search engines including PSYCHInfo, ERIC, the Professional Development Collection, and the Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection using key words *school counselors’ role, SWPBIS implementation, and systemic school reform*, as well as key phrases such as “*school counselor perceptions of School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports*” and “*school counselor perceptions of systemic reform in schools*.” Each search was undertaken separately using a single search engine and a unique combination of key words or phrases. In order to ensure all literature was located, the term “school counselor” was also substituted by “guidance counselor”, “school specialists”, and “counselor” with the same result. Searches were done with *perception* linking key words *school counselor* and with connectors such as *and* or simply a (+) sign.

The criteria for inclusion in this review of literature included empirical studies or descriptive articles about school counselors, school counseling programs or school counseling interventions conducted and published in peer-reviewed journals pertaining to RTI, PBIS, student outcomes, and school climate. An empirical study is undertaken as a means to gain knowledge through a systematic method of observation. A descriptive article, on the other hand, synthesizes existing studies in an effort to gain new knowledge, inform practitioners, or to influence policy makers. Including both empirical studies and descriptive articles in this review was helpful to more fully answer the research questions identified when initiating this review. A total of six studies including Gruman & Hoelzen
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(2011); Ryan, Kaffenberger, & Gleason (2011); Ockerman, Mason, & Hollenbeck (2012); Sullivan, Long, & Kucera, (2011); Debnam, Pas, & Bradshaw (2013); and Anderson-Ketchmark & Alvarez, (2010) were identified in the initial search. A separate search of school counselors and student outcomes resulted in three articles published in peer-reviewed journals. These studies include: Carey, and Dimmitt (2012); Luck and Webb (2009); Palmer and Erford (2012). Studies that explored school counselors’ impact on school climate included: Hernandez & Seem (2007); Ray, Lambie, and Curry (2007); Henry, McNab, & Coker (2005); and Sink & Spencer (2005).

Abstract Search Process

Each abstract was reviewed for fit to the criteria (empirical studies or descriptive articles about school counselors, school counseling programs or school counseling interventions conducted and published in peer-reviewed journals pertaining to RtI, PBIS, student outcomes, and school climate.) The 13 articles and studies that met the criteria were reviewed in full and included in the review. Articles were coded by their topic area, methodology, research questions, and findings.

Table 1. Systematic review of literature

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<th>Sub-Topic</th>
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<th># That meet the criteria</th>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>School Counselors and Student Outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Articles</td>
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Results

The body of literature about school counselors and PBIS is not robust. There are more articles and studies published that link school counseling to Response to Intervention globally than to SWPBIS specifically. This may be symptomatic of shifts in the literature at large. RtI first gained national recognition in 2004 when it was referenced in the reauthorization of IDEA (Ockerman, et al., 2010). Since SWPBIS is often referred to as the “behavior side” of the RtI triangle, this literature search included all references to school counselors and RtI. RtI first gained national recognition in 2004 when it was referenced in the reauthorization of IDEA (Ockerman, et al., 2010).

In short, review of both school counseling literature and SWPBIS literature reveals that no studies about school counselor perceptions of SWPBIS implementation have been conducted and published in peer reviewed journals. However, Curtis, VanHorne, Robertson, and Karvonen (2010) studied the impact of SWPBIS implementation on an elementary school and highlighted the role of school counselors on the leadership team. They discussed implications for school counselors including the potential for school counselors involved in multi-tiered prevention programs to reach a greater number of students. Regular consultation between the school counselor and the principal to address their comprehensive behavioral referral system improved their working relationship. Moreover, Curtis et al. (2010) found that the school counselor at this elementary school played a key role in maintaining outcome data and worked collaboratively to address behavioral concerns.

Studies of school specialists in the related fields of school psychology and school social work are more plentiful (Sullivan et al., 2011; Anderson-Ketchmark & Alvarez,
A study of 557 school psychologists surveyed their perceptions of the SWPBIS approach (Sullivan et al., 2011). The study revealed that 83% of participants employed at sites where SWPBIS was implemented believed that it had contributed to improved behavior and 80% attributed improvements in school climate to the approach. School psychologists were asked about the changes in their professional duties as a result of implementation. While 32.2% reported an increase level of involvement in interventions, 27.6% reported a decrease and 40.1% indicated no change.

Like school psychologists, school social workers are trained to support students in need of Tier two and three supports. Anderson-Ketchmark & Alvarez noted that school social workers have the skill set needed to support SWPBIS given their ability to conduct FBAs and provide both Tier two and Tier three interventions (Anderson-Ketchmark & Alvarez, 2010). One study suggested that statewide implementation first focused on school psychologists and school social workers and then brought on other school personnel including school counselors secondarily (Netzel & Eber, 2003).

There were many studies of school administrators’ perceptions of the role of school counselors (Kirchner & Setchfield, 2005; Amatea & Clark, 2005; and Dodson, 2009). They reveal the ever-changing role definition for school counselors caught between the role of mental health provider and quasi-administrator.

School counselors’ perceptions of Response to Intervention have not been fully explored. A descriptive article integrates RtI with school counseling programs to reveal important overlapping constructs such as a tiered delivery of service, use of data and assessment to inform practice, and a foundation in social justice and advocacy (Ockerman, et al., 2012). Ockerman and her colleagues suggest “an understanding of the
foundations of RtI, and how it intersects with, and informs, the role of the professional school counselor is critical” (p. 4).

**School Counselors and Student Outcomes**

The need for accountability for school counseling interventions is high in the current educational climate. Carey and Dimmit (2012) compiled an overview of six statewide studies of student outcomes. Together these studies conducted in Utah, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Missouri shed light on important questions related to effective practice in field of school counseling. Each state study is centered on the change in student outcomes after implementing the ASCA national model of a comprehensive school counseling program. The impact of school counseling programs were hampered by larger student to counselor ratios (Carey & Dimmit, 2012).

The importance of student to counselor ratio is referred to often in school counseling literature (Lapan et al., 2012; Carrell & Carrell, 2006; Young, 2004). The ratio suggested by ASCA is no more than 250 students to one school counselor. Current ratios hover closer to 1:471 (ASCA, 2012).

Similarly, Palmer and Erford (2012) looked at two Maryland public school districts and conducted ASCA program audits to determine the effectiveness of school counseling at each school. Of the 113 schools included in the study, only the high schools (n=18) showed a correlation between more comprehensive school counseling program implementation and a boost in attendance. The study had sought to show a correlation between implementation of comprehensive school counseling programs and student achievement but did not. Extant literature has demonstrated otherwise (Lapan et al., 2001; and Nelson et al., 1998).
On a smaller scale, Luck and Webb were able to demonstrate the effectiveness of a school counseling curriculum aimed at improving academic achievement entitled, Student Success Skills (SSS). In this case example, the academic achievement of 4th and 5th graders on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test was tracked. Students received small group intervention sessions with the school counselor using SSS. They found that 90% of the students who got the intervention showed improvement on the FCAT. This type of targeted intervention is used in schools implementing SWPBIS.

School Counselors and School Climate

The feel of a school, the intangible elements such as how welcoming it is and the relationships fostered between staff members and students all make up the climate of a school. It incorporates both the sense physical and emotional safety one experiences while at school (Bucher & Manning, 2003; Peterson & Skiba, 2001; Ray, Lambie & Currie, 2007). School climate impacts both students and staff productivity (Sutton & Fall, 1995).

Likewise, school counselors have impact on their school climate when they team with other educators to consider changes that can be made to create a more positive learning environment in their school (Ray et al., 2007). Working collaboratively with other educators to meet the needs of students is a common centerpiece in school counseling literature (Henry, McNab & Coker, 2005; Ray et al., 2007).

ASCA recommended that school counselors should create comprehensive programs that provides for all students’ social, emotional and academic needs (Henry et al., 2005; ASCA, 2005). The ASCA National model calls for a majority of the counselor’s time (80%) to be spent in direct service of students (Hatch & Bowers, 2002).
Students’ mental health needs are best met by an interdisciplinary team approach by, first, looking at the overall climate of the school as it relates to issues of safety and student learning (Henry et al., 2005). The ability to build trusting and caring relationships with teachers is an essential component to school climate (Ray, et al., 2007). These types of relationships facilitate heightened student engagement in learning and greater academic success (Buckley, Storino & Sebastiani, 2003). Given school counselors’ training, interpersonal awareness, and self-reflective capabilities, school counselors are uniquely positioned to help foster a positive and caring climate in their schools (Ray et al., 2007; Hayes & Paisley, 2002; Henry, et al., 2005).

Sink and Spencer (2005) illustrated the direct impact of school counselors on school climate on the classroom level in their psychometric study. They studied the reliability and validity of the My Class Inventory-Short Form (MCI-SF). The result was a modified version (18 items) of the MCI-SF that can be used by school counselors before and after conducting interventions with students in a classroom setting. For example, school counselors could use the MCI-SF before and after teaching a pro-social curriculum such as Second Step or Strong Kids.

Conclusion

A gap in the literature exists at the crossroads of school counseling programs and establishing systematic multi-tiered behavioral and academic supports. Empirical research about the impact of school counselors on student outcomes and school climate informs our understanding of professional effectiveness made possible through systemic reform (Curtis et al., 2010; Marteens & Andreen, 2013). Most recently, research has
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focused on case studies (Curtis et al., 2010), evidence based interventions (Marteens & Andreen, 2013; Gruman & Hoelzen, 2011), and school-wide implementation of SWPBIS by a single school counselor in a single school. The purpose of this study was to uncover the perceptions of school counselors about the changes they have noted in their student outcomes, school climate and professional effectiveness while working to implement SWPBIS framework with fidelity at their site.
Chapter III

Methods

Research Design

In order to understand the impact of SWPBIS on student outcomes, school climate, and professional effectiveness from the perspective of school counselors, a multiple round Delphi study was completed to gather the collective expertise of school counselors practicing in fully implemented schools and hopefully arrive at consensus regarding research questions.

The Delphi method is an avenue for “structuring a group communication process” (Linstone & Turoff, 1975, p. 3) usually centered on a complex problem or process. Often, a Delphi is designed to help support a decision making process (Clayton, 1997). Delphi studies have been used extensively in the fields of military strategy, nursing, and for a variety of educational purposes. The objectives of the Delphi approach include:

1. To determine or develop a range of possible program alternatives; 2. To explore or expose underlying assumptions or information leading to different judgments; 3. To seek out information that may generate a consensus on the part of the respondent group; 4. To correlate informed judgments on a topic spanning a wide range of disciplines, and; 5. To educate the respondent group as to the diverse and interrelated aspects of the topic (Delbecq, Van de Van, & Gustafson, 1975, p. 11).

A Delphi study makes it possible to assemble the shared experiences of school counselors from a variety of schools. Through this group communication process, consensus about the chief benefits to students, school climate, and school counselor
effectiveness can be reached. Milsom and Dietz (2009) suggested that Delphi is “useful when feedback is desired from a group of individuals who, for geographic or financial reasons, cannot realistically meet in person” (p. 316). Implementation of SWPBIS is a complex and multifaceted process that becomes highly contextualized to one’s own environment. Opening up dialogue with effective implementers shed light on improvements in school climate, student outcomes, and school counselor effectiveness. The Delphi method informs readers of the expert judgments of others (Clayton, 1997) and is a “systematic, rigorous and effective methodology designed to elicit potent and user-friendly answers” (Clayton, 1997, p. 374) to relevant questions.

The conventional Delphi involves sending out a questionnaire to expert responders. Based on their responses, a list of questions is developed and distributed to arrive at consensus about the given topic (Clayton, 1997). A Delphi is, in short, a method designed to enable a group to reach consensus (Fish & Busby, 1996). There are three characteristics of the technique. First, anonymity within participants is central to the process because it frees the participant to speak freely about key issues involved in the study. Through the use of questionnaires, participant’s identities are shielded. Although the researcher is aware of the identities of respondents, participants do not learn each other’s identities. Thus, responses are kept confidential by the researcher. Second, controlled feedback facilitates dialogue of a large group potentially in discord (Yousuf, 2007). In each round, results are summarized for participants. Lastly, group opinion is represented by a statistical average inclusive of all responses (Yousuf, 2007).

There are many strengths of the Delphi method as a means for collecting data. Delphi studies can bring together experts who are geographically, linguistically, and
philosophically diverse (Yousuf, 2007). Large groups can be polled more easily using a Delphi than in a face-to-face meeting. It is not possible for one voice to dominate other voices using the Delphi method (Linstone & Turnoff, 1975; Yousuf, 2007). According to Yousuf, “it helps prevent groupthink” (Yousuf, 2007, p. 4) and has the benefit of flexible time periods in which to answer questionnaires via handwritten or computer generated means.

**Participants**

School counselors who have been actively involved in the implementation of SWPBIS have the knowledge and experience necessary to answer the initial open-ended questions about the impact on student outcomes, school climate, and their own professional effectiveness. Thus, a purposeful sample was utilized to identify consistent themes concerning the impact of SWPBIS. School counselors who have actively participated for a minimum of three years in the design and implementation of SWPBIS in their schools as part of their leadership teams were asked to serve as experts in the study. Statewide implementation coordinators identified middle and high schools that have been implementing SWPBIS with fidelity between 2009 and 2012 for the purpose of recruiting participants for this study. Each school had a school counselor on their implementation and or current leadership team. Site level administrators confirmed this information via email and or telephone contact with the researcher.

Schools implementing SWPBIS make a commitment to regular evaluation of their implementation (Algozzine et. al, 2010). This target population is familiar with the outcomes of SWPBIS implementation because evaluation measures such as the School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) and the Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) indicate that their
school has implemented with fidelity (measures described in subsequent Dependent Measures section). Statewide implementation coordinators keep extensive databases of schools implementing SWPBIS. These data include the SET score of each participating school over the period of their implementation process.

The BoQ (Cohen, Kincaid, & Childs, 2007) is a 53-item annual self-assessment measure completed by a school team and their PBIS coach. Like the SET, the BoQ is administered each year in each school. A score of 70% or greater on the BoQ indicates fidelity of implementation (Cohen et al., 2007). Currently, score reporting is not standardized state to state.

In order to identify school counselors who were actively involved on SWPBIS implementation teams in schools deemed to demonstrate high fidelity, state PBIS coordinators were contacted via e-mail. A list of schools was generated in states with high concentrations of schools implementing with high fidelity that fit the following criteria:

(a) Schools must be currently implementing SWPBIS during the 2013-14 school year.
(b) Schools must have earned a SET score of 80% or above at least twice between 2009 and 2012 or
(c) Schools must have earned a BoQ score of 70% or above at least twice between 2009 and 2012.
(e) Schools must have a school counselor on their implementation and/or current leadership team.

First, state PBIS coordinators were asked to identify five high schools and 15 middle
schools that fit the criteria. States selected to participate in the study had both high rates of implementation and evidence of consistent data collection. States included in this study were Connecticut, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, and Wisconsin. Second, school administrators were contacted by the researcher via e-mail or phone to identify school counselors who were serving on their SWPBIS implementation or leadership teams. In some cases, the researcher was directed to a guidance secretary for the names of school counselors on PBIS implementation teams. Third, follow up calls were made to any principals of sites that did not respond to the initial e-mail. Finally, during the initial Delphi round, 57 school counselors from 5 states were invited to take part in the study. These school counselors had participated in the school implementation process either as a leader and implementer; or as an interventionist in schools that met the inclusion criteria.

The main challenge in conducting Delphi studies is attrition of participants. Should significant numbers of participants drop out after the initial round, it is more challenging to build consensus with only a few remaining responders. Most Delphi studies have less than 50 respondents to make consensus building manageable (Witkin & Altschuld, 1995). Most studies include between 15 and 20 participants (Ludwig, 1997). The goal for a Delphi study is to recruit between 30 and 50 experts (Skulmoski, Hartman, & Krahn, 2007). However, there is a lack of agreement about the optimal number of participants in a Delphi study (Delbecq, et al., 1975; Hsu & Sandford, 2007) where the range is anywhere from 10 to 50 participants.

**SWPBIS Measures**

The development of fidelity measures for SWPBIS implementation has taken place over the past 12 years to “provide a rigorous measure of primary prevention
practices” (Horner et al., 2004, p. 3). The School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) has been found to be a valid and reliable measure that is administered by an outside evaluator to assess the “impact of school-wide training and technical assistance efforts” (Horner et al., 2004, p. 3). The SET was developed over a 3-year period and piloted in 150 elementary and middle schools. It contains 28 items that are broken down into the seven key features defined as:

1. School-wide behavioral expectations are defined;
2. These expectations are taught to all children in the school;
3. Rewards are provided for following the expectations;
4. A consistently implemented continuum of consequences for problem behaviors is put in place;
5. Problem behavior patterns are monitored and information is used for ongoing decision-making;
6. An administrator actively supports and is involved in the effort; and
7. The school district provides support to the school in the form of functional policies, staff training opportunities, and data collection opportunities.” (Horner et al., 2004, p. 5).

Each item is scored as either 0, 1, or 2 (0 = not implemented, 1 = partially implemented, and 2 = fully implemented). A score of 80% or higher indicates fidelity of implementation. Site teams receive a detailed report of their scores in each of the seven areas (Horner et al., 2004). Horner et al., 2004 found the measure to be valid and reliable based on their analysis of statistical psychometric data generated by administering the SET in 45 schools. They reviewed:
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a. calculations of means, variances, and discriminability indices of items and subscales, as well as of total SET scores;

b. observer agreement and correlation analysis for examining reliability of SET scores; and

c. correlational and sensitivity-to-change analyses examining the validity of SET scores for specific interpretations and uses (Horner et al., 2004, p. 5).

Outside evaluators complete the SET by document review, observations, and interviews with site administrators, teachers and students. The SET measures fidelity of implementation. The results are used to:

1. assess features that are in place;

2. determine annual goals for school-wide effective behavior support;

3. evaluate on-going efforts toward school-wide behavior support;

4. design and revise procedures as needed; and

5. compare efforts toward school-wide effective behavior support from year to year. (SET, Version 2.1, pbis.org)

The Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) (Kincaid, Childs, & George, 2005) was designed as a self-assessment measure of fidelity of SWPBIS implementation on the primary or universal level for a single school (Cohen, Kincaid, & Childs, 2007). It is a 53-item rating scale completed by the implementation team which includes 10 subscales: SWPBIS team, faculty commitment, effective discipline procedures, data entry, expectations and rules, reward system, lesson plans, implementation plans, crisis plans, and evaluation (Cohen, Kincaid, & Childs, 2007). A score of 70% or above indicates fidelity of implementation on the universal level. The BoQ has been rigorously validated.
by studies that closely examined the instrument’s internal consistency, test-retest reliability, inter-rater reliability and concurrent validity (Cohen, Kincaid, & Childs, 2007).

Both the SET and the BoQ are administered in schools implementing SWPBIS under the direction of their technical assistance team.

**Procedure**

Recruitment took place through e-mail invitation. School counselors were recruited based on their school implementing SWPBIS with fidelity over the past five years. State SWPBIS implementation coordinators generated these school lists for their respective states. Available data on each school’s SET and BoQ scores over the past five years were provided when possible. In total, 57 school counselors were asked to participate in a study about SWPBIS implementation and 32 agreed to answer all four surveys. A total of 26 school counselors agreed to take part in the study.

Demographic questions were asked to ascertain the school counselor’s experience, school type and setting. Open-ended questions were used to initiate the Delphi process and were posed to participants via group e-mail. This allowed the researcher to “widely cast the research net” (Skulmoski, et al., 2007, p. 10).

**Round one.** In round one, participants were asked to answer demographic questions and three open-ended questions about the impact of implementing SWPBIS at their school. Ample space was provided to share answers about the following:

1. What changes have you noticed to student outcomes as a direct result of SWPBIS?
2. What changes have you noticed to your school climate as a direct result of
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SWPBIS?

3. In what ways, if any, do you feel more effective as a school counselor as a result of implementing SWPBIS?

Responses from round one were then coded to identify major themes shared to address perceived changes to student outcomes, school climate and professional effectiveness.

Coding system

The coding system outlined by Jenkins and Smith (1994) requires the researcher to summarize, edit, and eliminate redundancies while using the respondent’s original phrasing as much as possible.

In order to ensure inter-rater reliability, the responses to the first questionnaire were shared with a second researcher familiar with the Delphi technique. To accomplish this, a list of responses from the school counselors was shared unedited with the second rater. The second rater independently scored the subject’s responses and created a list of themes. When compared, an inter-rater reliability of 95% was achieved. This score should be 90% or greater (Jenkins, 1992; Fish & Busby, 1996). The following themes emerged: changes in student attendance, academic achievement, and behavior; use of recognition and rewards; staff and student relationships; changes to overall school climate; student to student relationships; staff to student relationships; staff relationships; changes to the role of the school counselor; effectiveness; use of time; use of data; role of collaboration; impact on school counseling program; and challenges to implementation.

Round two. Themes derived and coded after round one were then posed as statements in the form of a questionnaire in round two. All responses about perceptions
of student outcomes, school climate, and professional effectiveness were compiled. For example, if one or multiple respondents in round one indicated that student attendance had improved as a result of SWPBIS implementation, a statement was created such as: “student attendance has improved at my school as a result of SWPBIS.” For each of the 65 items, respondents assigned a Likert score between one and seven to quantify the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with a specific item (Appendix E).

**Round three.** In round three, the interquartile range for each item was calculated and shared with participants. The interquartile range was calculated for each item. This included identifying: the Likert scores for each item, the median, the numbers above and below the median, the median below the mean (Q1) and the median above the mean (Q3), and then subtracting Q1 from Q3.

The common guideline for achieving consensus or agreement in a Delphi study is a median score of 6 or 7 on a 7 point Likert scale with interquartile ranges of less than or equal to 1.5 (Jenkins & Smith, 1994). The median is considered the most accurate measure used to reflect consensus because it mitigates the expectation of agreement inherent in this methodology (Jacobs, 1996). Items that do not achieve agreement in round two are identified to the participants in the third round. If these items continue to remain outside of agreement in round three, they are reported as such.

Participants were informed in round three that: 1. The IQR is the numerical difference between the middle 50% of ratings and that an IQR of 1.00 or less would suggest that the middle 50% of participants responded very similarly, 2. That an IQR of 0.00 means that the middle 50% of participants all responded the same, and 3. That a larger IQR would indicate greater variation in responses (Milsom & Dietz, 2009). Participants were asked
if they agreed or disagreed with the consensus. Items were shared as those who have achieved agreement and those that had not. Results were reported in tables of agreement and disagreement, one for each of the major areas discussed: student outcomes, school climate, and professional effectiveness. Participants described why they remained outside of consensus if they disagreed (Yousuf, 2007). For example, if a respondent did not agree that implementing SWPBIS had improved his/her professional effectiveness concerning their Tier 1 program, they explained their reasons why. During this round, participants shared any other clarifications about their judgments.

**Round four.** In this final round, participants were provided a list of items that did not achieve consensus, their ratings, and opinions shared on these items as well as a list of items that achieved consensus (Hsu & Sanford, 2007). This provided a final opportunity for panelist to revise their opinions (Hsu & Sanford, 2007). The results of the final round included multiple themes endorsed by all participants concerning the impact of SWPBIS implementation with fidelity on student outcomes, school climate, and professional effectiveness.

The achievement of consensus or agreement in a Delphi study is subject to interpretation. According to Hsu & Sanford (2007), “consensus on a topic can be decided if a certain percentage of the votes fall within a prescribed range” (p.4). For the purpose of this study, consensus or agreement was reached if 70% of respondents scored an item either a 6 or 7 on the Likert scale. Green’s 1982 study suggests this percentage adequately captures agreement in a Delphi study (Green, 1982).

Perceived changes to student outcomes, school climate and professional effectiveness are listed in the tables with their Likert score and IQR. Participants are
considered experts because they are working in schools where SWPBIS is implemented with fidelity. Some were part of the initial design and implementation; others joined the leadership team afterwards. All have access to institutional data about student outcomes such as demographic, academic achievement, attendance, discipline, high school completion rates, and college going rates.

School counselor participants in this study were encouraged to anonymously share whatever came to mind when they consider the impact of SWPBIS on student outcomes, school climate, and their own professional effectiveness. The researcher did not guide survey responses in any way. This ensured that participants could speak freely about their experiences (Rowe & Wright, 2011). In the second round, the types of observations that they have made were refined into a Likert scaled questionnaire. Items were also be ranked in order of priority. School counselors were encouraged to answer this questionnaire honestly. Interquartile ranges were computed as the researcher attempted to find agreement and create subsequent questionnaires. Thus, quantitative values were assigned to the level of agreement about school counselors’ perceptions.
Chapter IV

Results

Chapter four details the response rates and demographic information about the participants of this study. Results from each of the four rounds are shared as they relate to each of the three research questions posed. Lastly, overall results from the study are presented.

Response Rate

Of the 57 school counselors identified as members of their PBIS leadership team, 32 (56%) agreed to take part in all four rounds of this study. Of the 32 who agreed to take part, 26 completed round one (81%). Round two was completed by 17 school counselors (53%). In round three, 18 school counselors responded (56%). Finally, in round four, 13 responded to the final survey (41%). In order to preserve anonymity, each round was sent to all 32 participating school counselors.

Table 2. Response Rate of School Counselor Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counselors</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Total School Participating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Identified</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Agreed to Participate</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Completing Round 1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Completing Round 2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Completing Round 3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Completing Round 4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant Demographics

Initially, 57 school counselors from 5 states were identified to participate in the study. The table below indicates the number of school counselors from each of the five states included, their schools, settings and years of experience. A total of 32 school counselors indicated that they would participate in all four rounds of the survey. During the first round, 26 school counselors who served on their PBIS leadership teams participated. Table 3 depicts school counselor demographics for Round One.

Table 3. School Counselors Demographics: Round One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total Counselors identified</th>
<th>Total counselors in Round One</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Carolina</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Number of participants in round one</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 5yrs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 yrs</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 15 yrs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 20 yrs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 or more yrs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total 26 50%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of Participants In round one</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of Participants In round one</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle/High School</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question One Results**

**Round One.** Round one was e-mailed to participants on February 11, 2014. In this round, there were three questions posed. The first was “what specific changes have you observed in your outcomes for your students since your implemented PBIS/RTI ?” Respondents shared 25 unique responses. These responses were coded under the categories of attendance, academics, behavior, recognition, staff and student relationships and challenges to implementation. After the responses were coded and condensed, 14 items were compiled into a Likert-type scale survey (see Appendix F).
There were several instances where participants indicated responses that were not consistent with the question asked. For example, one participant indicated that their school lacks the resources to fully implement PBIS under student outcomes. Responses of this nature were coded to a separate category entitled challenges to implementation. Some responses fit more than one category. For example the increase in positive staff and student relationships is both a positive student outcome and an improvement to school climate. Since there were more mentions of this under school climate, the increase in positive staff and student relationships will be discussed under question number two.

**Round two.** As part of the second round, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) on 14 items identified as school counselors’ perceptions of changes that result from PBIS implementation. This round was sent on Friday February 21, 2014. Participants had until Friday February 28, 2014 to respond. There were 17 participants in round two (53% response rate). See Appendix L for the dispersion of responses.

During round two there were four items that reached agreement regarding student outcomes. Therefore 7% of the items reached consensus after round two (see Table 4). Agreement is reached in a Delphi study when at least there is a median score of at least 6.00 and an interquartile range of 1.5 or less (Jenkins & Smith, 1994).

Table 4. *Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes: Round 2 Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Interquartile Range</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a result of PBIS implementation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Student attendance has improved.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SCHOOL COUNSELORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF SWPBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tardiness has decreased</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>There are fewer incidents of bullying.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Individual learning needs are better met.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>Student behavior in hallways has improved.</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Students are more motivated to behave.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><strong>I notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions.</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>There are more opportunities for students to be mentored.</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Students have a more positive connection to school.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>Students have a more positive connection to teachers.</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>There has been a reduction in suspensions.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>There has been a reduction in failing grades.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Students spend more time in class.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants were asked to share additional comments about student outcomes that have resulted from PBIS implementation at their school.
Table 5. Student Outcomes at PBIS schools: Round 2 Comments

Comments

- Teaching the expectations and having them posted leaves no room for discrepancy or inconsistency. Students are more aware of the rules and how misconduct is addressed.
- Our school is continually improving; however, it's hard to determine if it's all due to PBIS since we are also implementing some academic interventions that probably contribute to the improvements.
- Just a clarification: We have had fewer office discipline referrals, however this is simply due to the fact that teachers don’t have time to electronically write referrals as needed. They are however taking more time to address the “minor” infractions rather than writing more referrals. Overall, I would consider our PBIS implementation to be “marginal” at best as far as positive results. Mostly because, due to a lack of state governmental funding, we simply do NOT have enough staff to meet all of the student needs.
- I like that I have a place to begin conversations with students about how they are doing behaviorally in school. I also like that I am able to see if there is a place/situation that students are more likely to need improvement, and focus on that.
- Suspensions remain about the same due to the make-up of students in one particular class.

The 10 remaining items that did not reach agreement were then added to the round three survey.

C. Round three. Round three was sent on March 2, 2014. Participants had until March 9, 2014 to complete the survey. Items that did reached agreement in round two were not included in the round three survey. Only those items that did not reach agreement were included in this round.

Table 6. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes: Round 3 Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Interquartile Range</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a result of PBIS implementation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Student attendance has</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
improved.

2. Tardiness has decreased  5   2  No
3. There are fewer incidents of bullying.  5   1  No
4. Individual learning needs are better met.  5   1  No
5. Students are more motivated to behave.  5   1  No

**6. Students have a more positive connection to school.**  6   1  Yes

7. There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals.  5.5   2  No
8. There has been a reduction in suspensions.  6   2  No
9. There has been a reduction in failing grades.  5   2  No

**10. Students spend more time in class.**  6   1  Yes

Table 7. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes: Round 3 Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item:</th>
<th>Comment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student attendance has improved.</td>
<td><em>Our data shows an improvement.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students have a more positive connection to teachers.</td>
<td><em>Students don't feel like staff [members] care about them.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There has been a reduction in ODRs.</td>
<td><em>For the past several years, this meant that there was less need for these referrals. During this current year, it is because teachers do not feel that discipline will be administered.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There has been a reduction in suspensions. *Suspensions are up this year, but in the past have been down. Again, this current year this is due to administration not giving students suspensions.*

D. Round four. On March 10, 2014 the fourth and final survey went out to the 32 participants. There were 11 respondents in round four of the survey. This is a 34.3% participation rate in the final round. Participants were asked to review and comment on items that reached agreement and those that did not pertaining to school climate. These comments are detailed in Table 8.

Table 8. *Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes: Round 4 Comments*

The following items reached agreement and indicate shared school counselors’ perceptions of observed changes in student outcomes as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Student behavior in hallways has improved.
2. I notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions.
3. There are more opportunities for students to be mentored.
4. Students have a more positive connection to teachers.
5. Students have a more positive connection to school.
6. Students spend more time in class.

Comments about this list of items that reached agreement:

*Since the implementation of PBIS at my school four years ago, the amount of time spent outside the classroom has drastically been reduced. In addition, students have a more positive connection to both school and teachers as a result of more incentives being offered for positive behaviors.*

*Students having a positive connection to teachers is still a concern for me at our*
SCHOOL COUNSELORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF SWPBIS

school. It continually comes up on the YRBS [yearly survey].

Eliminating our homeroom period each day to add more instruction time has interfered with student - teacher connections. This in turn has perhaps clouded the positive impact PBIS has had on points 2, 4 and 5.

Staffing issues play a part in the number of mentors who can be involved because of other PBIS responsibilities.

Hallway behavior - or at least common expectations - have been positive.

I would agree with some of the information listed above, but I'm not always sure how much is due to PBIS or how much is due to other RtI strategies put in place over the past through years.

Many of student disruptions occur in the hallways. We have tried several strategies, but nothing has made a marked impact. We continue to gather more info and implement new ways to address this problem.

We have implemented a mentoring program that positively impacts individual student behavior. Some students are immune to the positive benefits of a mentor and no behavior changes are noted.

The following items did not reach agreement and pertain to school counselors’ perceptions of observed changes in student outcomes as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Student attendance has improved.
2. Tardiness has decreased.
3. There are fewer incidents of bullying.
4. Individual learning needs are better met.
5. Students are more motivated to behave.
6. There has been a reduction in failing grades.
7. There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals.
8. There has been a reduction in suspensions.

Comments about this list of items that did not reach agreement:

Attendance:
We have attendance incentives that work most of the time for students without behavior issues. This strategy does not work as well with our repeat offenders.

Bullying:

I disagree with number three, “there are fewer incidents of bullying.” PBIS at my school has been effective in reducing the amount of bullying behaviors. [We have] More school-wide initiatives to reduce bullying have been implemented along with PBIS.

I believe there is more reporting of bullying.

Suspensions:

If it weren't for our 9th grade class, there would be a reduction of suspensions.

Meeting Individual Learning Needs:

Student outcomes are not at the level we would hope, but we at least have a clearer map as to navigate students in meeting their needs.

Interventions have shown to be effective (pts. 4 and 6).

Office Discipline Referrals:

Since its implementation we have had a large staff turnover, PBIS has required that teachers manage more misbehaviors before referring them, and each class of students bring with it their own personalities and issues.

Student motivation to behave:

After 5 years, our incentives (pt. 5) in using BIRD Bucks as the only means to make school store purchases has been successful.

General comments about student outcomes:

Our school has seen improvements in many of these areas. I think there may be some difference depending on how much has been done through PBIS in these areas. Also, the PBIS rating for the year may have some correlation to the level of improvement.

Again, I don't believe that the implementation of PBIS is the only reason why we have experienced some positive changes in the items listed above.
Issues regarding Attendance (pts. 1 and 2) and Discipline (Pts. 3, 7 and 8) are more clearly understood as students are identified and interventions put in place. Also it is helpful for our stakeholders (teachers) to understand this data.

E. Final results. Of the 14 items pertaining to question one, six reached agreement. These items included improvement in student behavior in hallways and more time spent in class. In addition, participants agreed that there are more opportunities for students to be mentored. Participants also agreed that students have a more positive connection to both school and teachers. Finally, participants reached agreement that they notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions as a result of PBIS implementation. This accounts for 42.8% of the items. Four items reached agreement in round two and two others reached agreement in round three. Table 9 details the items that reached agreement for question one and the round in which they reached agreement.

Table 9. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes: Final Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Interquartile Range</th>
<th>Round Agreement Reached</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a result of PBIS implementation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student behavior in hallways has Improved.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are more opportunities for students to be mentored.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students have a more positive connection to teachers.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students have a more positive connection to school.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students spend more time in class.

Question Two Results

Round One. The second question posed in the first round was “what specific changes have you observed in your school climate since you implemented PBIS/RtI?” Respondents shared 37 unique responses. These responses were coded under the categories of overall school climate, student-to-student interactions, staff-to-student relationships, staff-to-staff interactions, and challenges to implementation (see Appendix K).

Round two. As part of the second round, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) on 14 items identified as school counselors’ perceptions of changes that result from PBIS implementation. There were 17 participants in round two (53% response rate). See Appendix L for the dispersion of responses.

Of the 12 items pertaining to school counselors’ perceptions of changes to school climate as a result of PBIS implementation, two reached agreement (17%) (See Table 10). Agreement is reached in a Delphi study when at least there is a median score of at least 6.00 and an interquartile range of 1.5 or less (Jenkins & Smith, 1994).

Table 10. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in School Climate: Round 2 Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Interquartile Range</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a result of PBIS implementation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. We have a calmer, more positive overall climate.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Students are more prepared to learn. 5 1 No

3. Our school is more welcoming. 6 1 Yes

4. Our students have more school spirit. 5 2 No

5. Students are more accepting of each other. 5 1 No

6. Students are more respectful of teachers. 5 2 No

7. Staff are on “the same page” about student behavior. 5 2 No

8. Teachers regularly give students specific praise. 5 1 No

9. I notice greater mutual respect amongst teachers. 5 1 No

10. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing Common Core). 5 1 No

11. We experience increased staff collaboration. 5 2 No

12. Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building. 5 2 No

Participants were asked to share additional comments about changes to school climate that have resulted from PBIS implementation at their school.

Table 11. Changes in School Climate at PBIS schools: Round 2 Comments

Comments

- The consistency from elementary to middle to high school is relevant and assists with the student transition period.
• The majority of staff are on board, but you still have a certain population of teachers that haven’t 100% bought in to the new changes created our PBIS and don’t understand the big picture. The majority has done an outstanding job forming connections!!
• One of the most difficult things to deal with is new teacher buy in—there are some who feel that we should not reward students for doing what others already do, and have a difficulty seeing how it will impact their classroom. We also have some teachers who use the matrix and expectations regularly who do not give the reward tokens to students.

The 10 remaining items that did not reach agreement were then added to the round three survey.

C. Round three. Round three was sent on March 2, 2014. Participants had until March 9, 2014 to complete the survey. Items that did reach agreement in round two were not included in the round three survey. Only those items that did not reach agreement were included in this round.

Table 12. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in School Climate: Round 3 Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Interquartile Range</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a result of PBIS implementation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Students are more prepared to learn.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Our students have more school spirit.</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Students are more accepting of each other.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students are more respectful of teachers.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Staff are on “the same page” about student behavior.</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Teachers regularly give students specific praise.  
   5  0  No

7. I notice greater mutual respect amongst teachers.  
   5  2  No

8. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing Common Core).  
   4  1  No

9. We experience increased staff collaboration.  
   5  2  No

10. Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.  
   5  1.75  No

Table 13. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in School Climate: Round 3 Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item:</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our students have more school spirit.</td>
<td>Community building opportunities are not as frequent since time is used for academic purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are more accepting of each other.</td>
<td>Certainly hope this is the case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers regularly give students specific praise.</td>
<td>Some staff are doing very well [at this].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. Round four. There were 13 participants in round four of the survey. This is a 40.6% participation rate in the final round. Participants were asked to review and comment on items that reached agreement and those that did not pertaining to school climate. These comments are detailed in Table 14.

Table 14. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in School Climate: Round 4 Comments
The following items reached agreement and indicate shared school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in school climate as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Our school is more welcoming.

2. We have a calmer, more positive overall climate.

Comments about this list of items that reached agreement:

- Staff buy-in is not as all inclusive as it could be. So, these statements are not ones with which I would agree.
- I think the PBIS has made our staff be more aware of their interactions with students which lends itself to a more positive school climate.
- School-wide efforts with PBIS integrated into monthly reminders, Mix It Up at Lunch, school celebrations monthly, student ambassadors, counseling lessons, guest speakers, etc.
- My school is more welcoming and has a calmer, more positive overall climate since PBIS was implemented. Parents have also noted this in parent feedback surveys.
- I agree that our climate is more welcoming.
- Some of this with the overall school is hard to judge.
- With the reduction in staff and other negative changes that happened in some of the schools, PBIS can only do so much to help improve the climate. There is a great deal of loss and "grief" as a result of the changes.

Comments about this list of items that did not reach agreement:

The following items did not reach agreement and pertain to school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in school climate as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Students are more prepared to learn.

2. Our students have more school spirit.
3. Students are more accepting of each other.

4. Students are more respectful of teachers.

5. Teachers regularly give students specific praise.

6. Staff are "on the same page" about student behavior.

7. I notice greater mutual respect among teachers.

8. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing the Common Core).

9. We experience increased staff collaboration.

10. Consistent behavioral expectations district-wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.

Students are more prepared to learn:

I do not believe that PBIS impacts learning preparation. I believe that the teaching and support are factors in preparation for learning.

Our students have more school spirit:

Students have more school spirit as a result of PBIS pep rallies and spirit days.

Students are more accepting of each other:

We still have middle school tolerance issues that have not been addressed by PBIS.

Students are more respectful of teachers:

Teachers are teaching PBIS character education lessons that do result in more respect.
Staff “on the same page” about behavior:

Concerning number 6, there is still disagreement about staff as to what constitutes minor and major infractions. For instance, some staff write many referrals for things that other teachers would handle themselves without the office referral.

There is a disconnection when it comes to the PBIS process even though staff development, teachers helping other teachers, and the “loopholes” in some of the wording associated with write-ups. We are still working on clarification.

The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing the Common Core):

PBIS has mitigated stressors in our school...period.

We experience increased staff collaboration:

Through committees and sub committees, we do experience an increased staff collaboration.

General comments:

To assess the effectiveness of PBIS alone is challenging....common core, changing demographics, middle school transitioning, limited resources, etc. are all intertwined. Overall, staff is collaborative and there is a feeling of "we are in this together" in the best interest of students.

E. Final results. Of the 12 items pertaining to question two, only two reached agreement. These items include our school is more welcoming and we have a calmer, more positive overall climate. This accounts for 16.6% of the items. Both items reached agreement in round two.

Question Three Results

Round One. The final question posed was “in what way(s) has implementing PBIS/RtI at your school impacted your effectiveness as a school counselors?”
Respondents shared 43 unique responses. These responses were coded under the categories of role of school counselor, overall effectiveness, use of time, use of data, role of collaboration, impact on school counseling program, improving student behavior, and challenges to implementation (see Appendix K).

**Round two.** As part of the second round, participants were asked to rate their level of agreement on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) on 14 items identified as school counselors’ perceptions of changes that result from PBIS implementation. There were 17 participants in round two (53% response rate). See Appendix L for the dispersion of responses.

Of the 32 items pertaining to school counselors’ perceptions of changes to their professional effectiveness as a result of PBIS implementation, two reached agreement (17%) (See Table 15). Agreement is reached in a Delphi study when at least there is a median score of at least 6.00 and an interquartile range of 1.5 or less (Jenkins & Smith, 1994).

Table 15. *Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Their Professional Effectiveness: Round 2 Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Interquartile Range</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>As a result of PBIS implementation:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I am better at acknowledging students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Rating</td>
<td>Improvement</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My classroom management skills have improved.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am more consistent with my expectations of students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I have more time for students who really need to see me.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I have more time to support students’ social and emotional growth.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I have more time to support students’ academic growth.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I collect data more regularly.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I am using data more consistently and effectively.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I am more aware of which interventions work for my students.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I am sought after for assistance with interventions.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I am better equipped to design academic interventions.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I am better equipped to design behavior interventions.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior. 6

22. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts. 5

23. There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all students at my school. 6

24. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges. 5

25. We now have increased communication between staff members. 5

26. We now have increased communication between staff members and students. 5

27. We now have increased communication between staff members and parents. 5

28. My developmental guidance lessons are interconnected with PBIS efforts. 5

29. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts. 5

30. PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts. 5

31. Data provides ability to create small counseling groups to address specific types of behaviors. 5

32. Data provides direction for individual counseling. 5

Participants were asked to share additional comments about changes to their professional effectiveness that have resulted from PBIS implementation at their school.
Table 16. Changes in Professional Effectiveness at PBIS schools: Round 2 Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• PBIS can be difficult to manage at times only for the fact that I serve on our steering committee but also am the chair of incentives. Our incentives committee has taken up the most time currently and in past years and has been the biggest obstacle initially to have teachers to buy in. We still have a great incentives program, but not all members of my committee are good about following through on tasks which leaves more work for me and some ineffectiveness with the overall incentives system. Our steering committee is solid!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I feel that the biggest challenges come when the whole staff, is not on the same page. There are times that I have felt that administration is not giving necessary punishment so that our numbers appear to be really good on paper. I also feel that there have been times that teachers have not felt supported by administration and therefore have stopped making referrals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is a challenge in being an internal coach, district lead coach for RtI and staying on top of my school counseling duties. Even though it takes a lot of balancing, overall the RtI model and the PBIS framework has made a major difference in the school climate, student/staff relationships, and the use of data. We have amazing support from the administration....that has been key along with building RtI/PBIS K-12 at the same time! We have been able to move at a faster pace making it a district wide initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We lack the funds in order to train staff properly as well as purchase materials for rewards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 30 remaining items that did not reach agreement were then added to the round three survey.

**C. Round three.** Round three was sent on March 2, 2014. Participants had until March 9, 2014 to complete the survey. Items that reached agreement in round two were not included in the round three survey. Only those items that did not reach agreement were included in this round.

Table 17. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Their Professional Effectiveness: Round 3 Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Interquartile Range</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As a result of PBIS implementation:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SCHOOL COUNSELORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF SWPBIS

1. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor. 4.5 1 No
2. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program. 5 1.75 No
3. I am better at acknowledging students. 5 2 No
4. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues. 5 2 No
5. My classroom management skills have improved. 4 1 No
6. I am more consistent with my expectations of students. 5.5 2 No
7. I have more time for students who really need to see me. 4 1.75 No
8. I have more time to support students’ social and emotional growth. 4 1 No
9. I have more time to support students’ academic growth. 4 2.5 No
10. I collect data more regularly. 5 2.75 No
11. I am using data more consistently and effectively. 5 2.5 No
12. I am more aware of which interventions work for my students. 5 2 No
13. I know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload. 5 2 No
14. The PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning. 4.5 1 No
15. I am sought after for assistance with interventions. 5 2 No
16. I am better equipped to design academic interventions. 4 3 No
|   |   |   |   |   |   |  
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17. I am better equipped to design behavior interventions. | 5 | 2 | No |
| 18. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions. | 3 | 4 | No |
| 19. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions. | 5 | 3 | No |
| 20. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions. | 5.5 | 2.5 | No |
| 21. I spend less time on disciplinary concerns. | 5 | 2 | No |
| 22. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts. | 5 | 1.75 | No |
| 23. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges. | 5 | 2 | No |
| 24. We now have increased communication between staff members. | 5 | 2 | No |
| 25. We now have increased communication between staff members and students. | 5 | 1.75 | No |
| 26. We now have increased communication between staff members and parents. | 5 | 1 | No |
| 27. My developmental guidance lesson are interconnected with PBIS efforts. | 4.5 | 2 | No |
| 28. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts. | 5 | 1.75 | No |
| 29. PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts. | 5 | 1.5 | No |
| 30. Data provides ability to create small counseling groups to address specific types of behaviors. | 5 | 1.75 | No |
| 31. Data provides direction for individual counseling. | 5 | 1 | No |
Table 18. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Professional Effectiveness: Round 3 Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item:</th>
<th>Comment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have more time for students who really need to see me.</td>
<td>I am the only counselor for over 630 kids - I see students who have the biggest crisis at the time...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I collect data more regularly.</td>
<td>I have less time as more has been added to my plate in this area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am using data more consistently and effectively.</td>
<td>We collect data as a team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am sought after more for assistance with interventions.</td>
<td>I have always assisted teachers in this way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges.</td>
<td>Personal connection time between teachers and students has diminished structural changes to make room for interventions and more instructional time in math and English-Language Arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We now have increased communication between staff members and students.</td>
<td>Increased electronic communication, but decreased teaming time among staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We now have increased communication between staff members and parents.</td>
<td>Not during class time; teachers do make themselves available outside of their contracted time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts.</td>
<td>Targeted small counseling groups in particular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts.</td>
<td>Anti-bullying efforts are the responsibility of all staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are angry I am asking them to do</td>
<td>Interventions are spearheaded by</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D. Round four. There were 13 participants in round four of the survey. This is a 40.6% participation rate in the final round. Participants were asked to review and comment on items that reached agreement and those that did not pertaining to school climate. These comments are detailed in Table 19.

Table 19. Implementing PBIS/RtI: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Professional Effectiveness: Round 4 Comments

The following items reached agreement and indicate shared school counselors’ perceptions of observed changes in their professional effectiveness as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior.
2. There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all children in my school.

Comments about the list of items that reached agreement:

- I agree on both. 1. We are reactive when behaviors do not show a pattern. We become realistic when patterns begin to emerge. 2. We have a secondary and tertiary committee to support behavior deficits for all children who show patterns of repeated negative behavior.
- In my building I do feel that we have a more concerted effort in working with students so some issues/items are no longer considered the "counselor's" responsibility.
- There is definitely more efforts at my school to combine behavior and academic deficits under PBIS through Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 interventions. Yes, I agree.

The following items did not reach agreement and pertain to school counselors’ perceptions of observed changes in their professional effectiveness as a result of
implementing PBIS:

1. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.
2. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program.
3. I am better at acknowledging students.
4. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues.
5. My classroom management skills have improved.
6. I am more consistent with my expectations of students.
7. I have more time for students who really need to see me.
8. I have more time to support students' social and emotional growth.
9. I have more time to support students' academic growth.
10. I collect data more regularly.
11. I am using data more consistently and effectively.
12. I am more aware of which interventions work for my students.
13. I know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload.
14. The PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning.
15. I am sought after more for assistance with interventions.
16. I am better equipped to design academic interventions.
17. I am better equipped to design behavior interventions.
18. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions.
19. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions.
20. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.
21. I spend less time on disciplinary concerns.
22. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts.

23. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges.

24. We now have increased communication between staff members.

25. We now have increased communication between staff members and students.

26. We now have increased communication between staff members and parents.

27. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts.

28. PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts.

29. Data provides direction for individual counseling.

Comments about this list of items that did not reach agreement:

- In my district I wish there had been more communication regarding school counselor's role with RtI. It was not rolled out systematically, but rather imposed and I feel ill-prepared to design and/or assist with interventions.

- There are many statements above that I would agree on. I think giving PBIS a chance to work and taking time to develop it will eventually lead to greater effectiveness and staff and student buy-in.

- As far as top tier interventions, my role as a sub-committee member is reflects goals of the new counselor evaluation.

- Reviewing discipline data helps me to form small groups and identify individual counseling needs.

- I never have enough time for students who need to see me.

- I am still very irregular in data collection as individual.

- I do use PBIS data to plan my program.

- I do not have an extensive knowledge of interventions.

- I am learning to progress monitor.
- Our school improvement plan is more effective to help identify barriers to student learning.

- I am just not familiar with these concepts. I consider this an area I really need to focus on.

- Principals deal with discipline

- I spend just as much time on conflict resolution. PBIS does not effect this issue.

- Through PBIS documentation communication has increased, but only minimally.

- Somewhat. I find that lack of time is the result of lack of participation in PBIS.

- Data helps determine student need for individual counseling based on discipline referrals. I think so many of us are pulled in so many directions, that these could not be agreed upon because of the nature of the question.

- PBIS doesn't define my role as a counselor, it is a program that I use to assist with my role as a counselor. I feel that PBIS is more of an implemented tool that leads to other things.

- PBIS has been positive in that several of the above areas have not been limited to the role of only the school counselor. As a high school counselor, PBIS doesn't always touch many aspects of our jobs unless we are on the PBIS team or directly involved somehow.

- The changing role, effectiveness and accountability of the school counselor is overwhelming to grasp at current time. PBIS has been positive in that several of the above areas have not been limited to the role of only the school counselor.

Do you have any final comments about implementing SWPBIS at your school or about participating in this study that you would like to share?

- I think PBIS has been a positive for our school.
• Those items that did not reach agreement made me feel a little better, that others were in the same situation (or similar) to the one I am in. I appreciate knowing this.

• PBIS is a new (3 years) system in our school. We like that it teaches our students the expectations that we have of them. The majority of our students have not received any referrals this year to date. Referrals help to document the behavior, but I believe we are ‘catching’ the same students that we would have with our ‘old’ honor level system.

• PBIS is here and we have implemented it with fidelity. We continue to add and make improvement to our existing PBIS program.

• In general, I feel like PBIS has had an overall positive impact on our middle school I find SWIS data helpful in addressing and targeting interventions that will lead to a more positive school climate and reduce the rate of bullying.

• It is important to communicate the vision and related goals with all educational stakeholders in order to have positive outcomes.

E. Final results. Of the 31 items concerning school counselors’ perspectives of the changes to their professional effectiveness in light of PBIS implementation, only 2 reached agreement in any of the rounds. Thus, only 6% of the items reached agreement. Only items that had a median of 6 and an interquartile range of 1.5 or less met the criteria for agreement (Jenkins & Smith, 1994). By these guidelines, only two items reached agreement: I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior and There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all children in my school. Both items reached this level of agreement with a median of 6 and an interquartile range of 1. Both reached agreement in the round two survey.
Chapter V
Discussion

This chapter includes a summary and discussion of research findings for each question posed to the study participants. Implications for school counselors are provided and limitations of the study are discussed. Finally, recommendations for future research are explored.

Research Question One – School Counselor Perception of Student Outcomes

The purpose of this question was to understand what positive student outcomes school counselors attributed to implementing SWPBIS with fidelity at their school.

Items that reached agreement. The school counselors participating in this study arrived at agreement on six of 14 items pertaining to student outcomes. This was the research question that reached the highest rate of agreement (42.8%). According to Ockerman et al. (2012) “It is incumbent upon professional school counselors to understand how RtI/[SWPBIS] affects their students as well as how they can integrate their services strategically and effectively” (p. 4). Implementation is highly context specific and interventions must be tailored to the needs of the specific site and refined as those needs change (Molloy et al., 2013; McIntosh, et al., 2014). Molloy et al. (2013) studied implementation in 166 elementary and secondary schools and identified the three most important elements for effective implementation to be clearly defined reward and violation systems as well as the need to adequately teach behavioral expectations.

Items that reached agreement were categorized into student outcomes that pertain to student behavior and relationship building.
Students. Items that reached agreement included: *student behavior in hallways has improved*, *students have a more positive connection to school*, and *students spend more time in class*. These positive student outcomes are supported by Luiselli et al., (2005) who found that whole-school intervention of positive behavioral interventions and supports was associated with decreased discipline problems over time (Curtis et al., 2010). One participant noted that *hallway behavior - or at least common expectations - have been positive*. However, school counselors at other schools noted that they were looking for ways to improve hallway behavior: *Many of student disruptions occur in the hallways. We have tried several strategies, but nothing has made a marked impact. We continue to gather more info and implement new ways to address this problem.*

The belief that students form a more positive connection to school is supported in the literature (Osher et al., 2002; Greenberg et al., 2003; Osher et al., 2008). Rates of students in school implementing SWPBIS with fidelity spend more time in class has been validated on the elementary level (Curtis et al., 2010), middle school level (Scott & Barrett, 2004) and high school (Bohanon et al., 2006). One middle school counselor stated: *since the implementation of PBIS at my school four years ago, the amount of time spent outside the classroom has drastically been reduced. In addition, students have a more positive connection to both school and teachers as a result of more incentives being offered for positive behaviors.*

Relationship. Three items that reached agreement pertained to improved relationships as a result of SWPBIS implementation. They included: *I notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions*, *students have a more positive connection to teachers*, and *there are more opportunities for students to be mentored*. Recent studies
have suggested that an important outcome for students in schools implementing SWPBIS is improved relationships with both peers and adults (Mitchell et al., 2010; Osher et al., 2010). Although this item reached agreement, one school counselor relayed doubt stating:

*Students having a positive connection to teachers is still a concern for me at our school. It continually comes up on the YRBS [yearly survey].* Several participants pointed out that systemic efforts to improve student-teacher connections can also be impacted when the school schedule which prioritizes all “down time” for academic intervention. One school counselor explained: *eliminating our homeroom period each day to add more instruction time has interfered with student - teacher connections. This in turn has perhaps clouded the positive impact PBIS has had.*

Mentoring is a key intervention for students with behavioral or academic concerns in schools (Rhodes et al., 2006). Even so, efforts to increase opportunities for students to be mentored came into question for two school counselors because of staffing. One participant recounted that *staffing issues play a part in the number of mentors who can be involved because of other PBIS responsibilities.* Another school counselor indicated: *we have implemented a mentoring program that positively impacts individual student behavior. Some students are immune to the positive benefits of a mentor and no behavior changes are noted.*

**Items that did not reach agreement.** Eight of the original 14 items pertaining to question one failed to reach agreement during the course of this study. These items were:

1. Student attendance has improved; 2. Tardiness has decreased; 3. There are fewer incidents of bullying; 4. Individual learning needs are better met; 5. Students are more motivated to behave; 6. There has been a reduction in failing grades; 7. There has been a
reduction in office discipline referrals; 8. There has been a reduction in suspensions.

Several items gained agreement from some participants and not others. The categories of items that did not meet agreement include attendance, student learning, and behavior.

**Attendance.** There is evidence in the PBIS literature of a positive impact on student attendance (Freeman, 2013; Netzel & Eber, 2003). Some participants in the current study also mentioned PBIS implementation in relation to student attendance. One participant explained: *we have attendance incentives that work most of the time for students without behavior issues. This strategy does not work as well with our repeat offenders.* Another respondent indicated that their school is continually improving their ability to use attendance and behavior data to inform intervention decisions: *issues regarding attendance and discipline are more clearly understood as students are identified and interventions put in place. Also it is helpful for our stakeholders (teachers) to understand this data.*

Relatedly, occurrences of decreasing tardiness can be found in PBIS studies including Ryan, Kaffenberger, and Carroll (2011). Ryan et al., (2011) details a case study in which a school counselor intervened with a chronically tardy elementary student (Ryan et al., 2011). None of our panel of school counselors noted a decrease in tardy incidents at their schools.

**Student learning.** Research studies have found that SWPBIS positively impacts student learning (Muscott et al., 2008; Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006; Simonsen et al., 2012). Curtis et al. (2010) advised that “the school counselor’s leadership role in a prevention program such as SWPBIS provided opportunities for reaching a large number
SCHOOL COUNSELORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF SWPBIS

of students and contributing to a safer environment for learning to occur” (Curtis et al., 2010 p. 5). The lack of agreement about the impact of SWPBIS on student learning suggests that it is possible that all students are not being reached, even in schools said to be implementing with fidelity.

In response to the item “individual learning needs are better met,” one respondent indicated that they are still very much in the process of impacting student achievement through SWPBIS implementation: Student outcomes are not at the level we would hope, but we at least have a clearer map as to navigate students in meeting their needs. Likewise, there was not agreement on the item “there has been a reduction in failing grades.”

Behavior. Items that did not reach agreement in this category included the reduced incidents of bullying, students’ motivation to behave, and a reduction in office discipline referrals (ODRs). Bradshaw (2013) details the benefits of addressing bullying through a whole-school prevention effort. Despite the fact that this item did not reach agreement, some agreed that they had experienced a decrease in bullying incidents. One school counselor shared: I disagree with number three, “there are fewer incidents of bullying.” PBIS at my school has been effective in reducing the amount of bullying behaviors. More school-wide initiatives to reduce bullying have been implemented along with PBIS. Another echoed this disagreement stating: I believe there is more reporting of bullying.

Systems of reward are designed to motivate students to behave (Molloy et al., 2013). In response to the item “students are more motivated to behave,” one school
counselor detailed their success by stating: *after 5 years, our incentives (using BIRD Bucks as the only means to make school store purchases) have been successful.*

The item regarding the reduction of ODRs failed to achieve agreement. It was the item most commonly mentioned in round one. A total of 14 school counselors who responded to round one indicated that ODRs reduced as a result of SWPBIS implementation. This disagreement is in contrast to key findings that support reduction of ODRs on the elementary level (Curtis et al., 2010; Luiselli et al., 2002; Scott, 2001; Taylor-Green & Kartub, 2000). There is also evidence of ODRs being reduced on the middle school level (Taylor-Green & Kartub, 2000) and high school level (Flannery, Fenning, McGrath, Kato, & McIntosh, 2013). In addition, researchers have found that as fidelity of implementation increased, ODRs decreased (Flannery et al., 2013). As one participant reflected, there was a lack of trust in the school-level data: *For the past several years, this meant that there was less need for these referrals. During this current year, it is because teachers do not feel that discipline will be administered.* This finding contradicts Flannery et al., 2013 that found that schools with higher SET scores experience a reduction in ODRs. Flannery (2013) suggested that, “adhering to the major SWPBIS systems, data, and practices may pay dividends in terms of student outcomes,” (p. 11). Likewise, school counselors did not reach agreement about a reduction in suspensions at their respective schools. One respondent explained “*suspensions remain about the same due to the make-up of students in one particular class.*”

The following echoes the same sentiment: *If it weren’t for our 9th grade class, there would be a reduction of suspensions. Another shared that suspensions are up this year, but in the past have been down. Again, this current year, this is due to the*
administration not giving students suspensions. Several PBIS studies suggest there is a positive association between implementation with fidelity and a reduction in suspension rates (Barrett, Bradshaw, & Lewis-Palmer, 2008; Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Skiba & Sprague, 2008).

Summary. The absence of agreement on all student outcome items likely reflects the variability of impact at different stages of implementation, changes in systems (i.e. new leadership), or the presence of multiple initiatives in play simultaneously, or a combination of these. Flannery et al., 2013 suggests that while implementation with fidelity commonly takes three to four years to achieve in elementary and middle schools (Sugai, Horner, & McIntosh, 2008), it can take five to eight years in high schools (Bohanon, et al., 2006; Flannery, Sugai, & Anderson, 2009). One school counselor concurred saying: I think giving PBIS a chance to work and taking time to develop it will eventually lead to greater effectiveness and staff and student buy-in. Another shared: PBIS is a new (three years) system in our school. We like that it teaches our students the expectations that we have of them. The majority of our students have not received any referrals this year to date. Referrals help to document the behavior, but I believe we are 'catching' the same students that we would have with our 'old' honor level system. One school counselor explains implementation fidelity through their own experience as: our school has seen improvements in many of these areas. I think there may be some difference depending on how much has been done through PBIS in these areas. Also, the PBIS rating for the year may have some correlation to the level of improvement. Giving systemic change ample time to take hold is a consistent theme in this study. Initial change
that yields positive results for students may give school counselors and other stakeholders the necessary motivation to expand implementation with fidelity.

Research Question Two – School Counselor Perception of School Climate

The purpose of this question was to understand what positive changes to school climate school counselors attributed to implementing SWPBIS with fidelity at their school.

Items that reached agreement. The school counselors participating in this study arrived at agreement on two of 12 items pertaining to student outcomes. These two items include our school is more welcoming and we have a calmer, more positive overall climate since PBIS was implemented. Each will be discussed separately.

Our school is more welcoming. Positive effects on school climate tend to be greatest three years post-training (Bradshaw et al., 2009). Use of a parent survey substantiates this school counselor’s response: my school is more welcoming and has a calmer, more positive overall climate since PBIS was implemented. Parents have also noted this in parent feedback surveys.

We have a calmer, more positive overall climate. Many studies point to a more positive overall school climate as an important goal and byproduct of effective SWPBIS implementation (Luiselli et al., 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2006; Bradshaw et al., 2008). One participant indicated that they notice greater awareness amongst their colleagues: I think the PBIS has made our staff be more aware of their interactions with students which lends itself to a more positive school climate. Another participant attributed improved behavior and school climate to the teaching of clear behavioral expectations: Teaching the expectations and having them posted leaves no room for discrepancy or
inconsistency. *Students are more aware of the rules and how misconduct is addressed.*

*The biggest outcome was the noticeable change in the overall school culture. It is a more positive school atmosphere for staff and students.*

**Items that did not reach agreement.** Ten of the original 12 items pertaining to question two reached agreement during the course of this study. The following items did not reach agreement for question two: 1. Students are more prepared to learn; 2. Our students have more school spirit; 3. Students are more accepting of each other; 4. Students are more respectful of teachers; 5. Teachers regularly give students specific praise; 6. Staff are "on the same page" about student behavior; 7. I notice greater mutual respect among teachers; 8. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing the Common Core); 9. We experience increased staff collaboration; 10. Consistent behavioral expectations district-wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.

Recent planned and unplanned loss of resources might also impact SWPBIS implementation (Bradshaw et al., 2012). One school counselor shared their experience by stating: *with the reduction in staff and other negative changes that happened in some of the schools, PBIS can only do so much to help improve the climate. There is a great deal of loss and "grief" as a result of the changes.*

**Academic Climate.** The item “students are more prepared to learn” did not reach agreement in rounds two or three. This finding contradicts large-scale studies of schools implementing SWPBIS that have demonstrated a positive impact on student achievement (Bradshaw et al., 2008). There is not clear evidence that SWPBIS “prepares students for learning” in the literature. One participant justified their disagreement with this item by
stating: *I do not believe that PBIS impacts learning preparation. I believe that the teaching and support are factors in preparation for learning.*

The other item in this category was “our students have more school spirit.” Some respondents indicated that efforts to improve school climate are sometimes hampered by emphasis on academic time on task. An example of this included: *community-building opportunities are not as frequent since [the majority] of time is used for academic purposes.* Another shared a different experience: *Students have more school spirit as a result of PBIS pep rallies and spirit days.*

**Student Relationships.** Two items that failed to reach agreement that pertained to student relationships were: “Students are more accepting of each other” and “Students are more respectful of teachers.” It is challenging to find data to support a shift in student relationships. However, PBIS has been shown to reduce bullying (Waasdorp, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2012). One respondent shared that they *certainly hope this is the case* in response to the item “students are more accepting of each other” in round three. Another attributed persistent intolerance to the middle school developmental stage: *We still have middle school tolerance issues that have not been addressed by PBIS.*

The item “students are more respectful of teachers” did not reach agreement in either round two or round three. One school counselor indicated that *teachers are teaching PBIS character education lessons that do result in more respect.* Thus, interventions are in place to improve key relationships for students in some schools.

**Adult Relationships.** A central component of improved school climate is improved staff relations. Neither of the items directly related to staff relations (“I notice greater mutual respect among teachers” and “We experience increased staff...
collaboration”) reached agreement. This contradicts Bradshaw’s findings that staff relations improve in schools implementing SWPBIS (Bradshaw et al., 2008). One school counselor indicated that: through committees and sub committees, we do experience increased staff collaboration. The presence of new systemic approaches to supporting students increases the need for effective collaborative teams. This study highlights the voices of school counselors in the field who are working with administrators, school psychologists, school social workers, school-based marriage and family therapists, special educators, and general educators to create more responsive interventions and practices for their schools. School counselors are well positioned to chair and support these committees and to facilitate their work.

A school counselor alluded to the myriad of initiatives and changes that impact school climate in their response: to assess the effectiveness of PBIS alone is challenging... common core, changing demographics, middle school transitioning, limited resources, etc. are all intertwined. Overall, staff is collaborative and there is a feeling of “we are in this together” in the best interest of students.

The item “the presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing the Common Core)” did not achieve agreement. However, one school counselor gave high praise to the positive impact of SWPBIS on student and staff stress level at their school by stating PBIS has mitigated stressors in our school...period.

Behavior. A common practice in schools implementing SWPBIS is for teachers to regularly give students specific praise at a rate of four times for every correction (Jeffery et al., 2009; Stormont, Smith & Lewis, 2007; Reinke et al., 2013; Myers, Simonsen, &
Inconsistency in this practice was noted by one school counselor who noted: *Some staff are doing very well [at this].*

Likewise the item “Staff are ‘on the same page’ about student behavior” did not reach agreement. Studies have noted this buy in as a crucial step in effective implementation (Flannery, Sugai, & Anderson, 2009; Kincaid, et al., 2007; Bradshaw et al., 2008). Flannery et al. (2013) suggested that “Focusing on system-level and foundational practices, such as achieving large-scale staff and student buy-in” is a critical step prior to the implementation of practices (p. 11). A school counselor participant in the study shared: *the majority of staff are on board, but you still have a certain population of teachers that haven’t 100% bought in to the new changes created out PBIS and don’t understand the big picture. The majority has done an outstanding job forming connections!!* One school counselor described their reasons for staying out of agreement on this point due the fact that: *there is still disagreement about staff as to what constitutes minor and major infractions. For instance, some staff write many referrals for things that other teachers would handle themselves without the office referral. Another echoed the same sentiment stating: There is a disconnection when it comes to the PBIS process even though staff development, teachers helping other teachers, and the “loopholes” in some of the wording associated with write-ups. We are still working on clarification.*

Studies show that enthusiasm for interventions may diminish over time (Shippen et al., 2005). SWPBIS programs must be continually monitored and revised to ensure impact. Otherwise rewards can become stale and ineffective (Curtis et al., 2010).

The item “Consistent behavioral expectations district-wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building” failed to reach agreement, in part,
because many respondents indicated that they are not currently implementing district wide. A school counselor participating in a large district-wide implementation shared that: *the consistency from elementary to middle to high school is relevant and assists with the student transition period.* Clear behavioral expectations are particularly important as students make the most challenging transition from middle to high school. Flannery et al. (2013) cautioned that “adapting standard practices and systems to the high school context is important to achieve fidelity of implementation and sustain it over time” (p. 12).

**Summary.** Changes to school climate are more subjective and harder to measure than changes in student outcomes. Respondents reached agreement on two general changes to school climate. First, they agreed that their “school was more welcoming as a result of SWPBIS implementation”. Second, they agreed that overall their “school was a calmer, more positive place to learn.” These findings are consistent with SWPBIS studies (Hunter, 2003; Bradshaw et al., 2008; Bradshaw et al., 2009; Mitchell, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2010). Perhaps this level of change is the initial result of implementation, a generally positive environment characterized by a calmer and more welcoming staff. In time, perhaps more schools will report the addition of improved staff relationships as a result of implementing SWPBIS with fidelity.

**Research Question Three – School Counselor Perception of Professional Effectiveness**

The purpose of research question three was to understand what positive changes in professional effectiveness school counselors attributed to implementing SWPBIS with fidelity at their school.

**Items that reached agreement.** The school counselors participating in this study
arrived at agreement on two of 31 items (6.4%) pertaining to professional effectiveness. This question generated the least agreement. The two items that reached agreement: “I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior” and “There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all children in my school” will be considered separately.

**I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior.**

Studies have detailed the use of evidence-based interventions that enable school staff to identify and intervene when behavior problems occur (Martens & Andreen, 2013; Ryan et al., 2011). One participant indicated that: *I like that I have a place to begin conversations with students about how they are doing behaviorally in school. I also like that I am able to see if there is a place/situation that students are more likely to need improvement, and focus on that.* Another shared an important distinction that: *we are reactive when behaviors do not show a pattern. We become realistic when patterns begin to emerge.* A third school counselor summed up their agreement with this item by stating: *We have found that issues are coming to us before they develop into something bigger. We are doing a lot of legwork with students to prevent things from getting to a discipline level.*

**There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all children in my school.** Agreement on this item was consistent with Curtis et al., 2010 in that “The school counselor’s oversight of outcome data and constructive methods for responding to teacher and student concerns contributed to team improvements” (p. 5). School counselors can play a significant role in creating systems that identify students in need and intervene (Martens & Andreen, 2013; Curtis et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 2011).
According to Ryan et al. (2011), “the school counselor is highly involved in student placement school-wide with the belief that appropriate teacher placement is the best intervention for a student” (p. 214). One participant explained that: *we have a secondary and tertiary committee to support behavior deficits for all children who show patterns of repeated negative behavior. By using the RtI [SWPBIS] process, intervention decisions are based on data, not teacher opinions* (Ryan et al., 2011).

One school counselor indicated programming was aligned with SWPBIS efforts by stating: *School-wide efforts with PBIS integrated into monthly reminders, Mix It Up at Lunch, school celebrations monthly, student ambassadors, counseling lessons, guest speakers, etc.*

Despite efforts to be proactive and preventative in regards to student behavior, one school counselor noted that the lack of alignment of staff and administration continues to negate SWPBIS implementation fidelity efforts: *I feel that the biggest challenges come when the whole staff is not on the same page. There are times that I have felt that administration is not giving necessary punishment so that our numbers appear to be really good on paper. I also feel that there have been times that teachers have not felt supported by administration and therefore have stopped making referrals.*

The findings are similar to McIntosh et al. (2014) who conducted qualitative and quantitative analyses with 254 school team members. They identified administrator support and school team functioning as the most important features of implementation quality and sustainability (McIntosh et al., 2014).

Another school counselor had a markedly different experience in regard to administrator support. This counselor shared the following in round two: *We have*
amazing support from the administration... that has been key along with building RtI/PBIS K-12 at the same time! We have been able to move at a faster pace making it a district wide initiative.

**Items that did not reach agreement.** Responses to question three demonstrated the greatest variability and the least agreement. Most items (93.5%) did not reach agreement. These items were divided into eight categories including school counselor role, school counseling program, use of time, capacity addressing behavior, capacity using data, capacity designing and implementing interventions, and communication. Each will be considered separately.

**School counselor role.** The item “PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor” did not reach agreement in round two or three of this study. Ockerman et al., 2012 stated that “the professional school counselor’s role continues to be mandated and determined by numerous sources, few of which have a solid understanding of the responsibilities of the school counselor” (Ockerman et al., 2012, p. 3). Since SWPBIS is not mandated in all states, it is not a widely accepted framework for defining the role of a school counselor. However, school counselors’ roles may be impacted as RtI and SWPBIS implementation become more widespread. Ockerman (2012) noted that: “Responding to the need of role clarification and educating the public about the appropriate responsibilities of the professional school counselor during significant shifts in educational reform is imperative” (p. 3).

Two participants addressed the question of role in their comments:

*In my district I wish there had been more communication regarding school counselor’s role with RtI. It was not rolled out systematically, but rather imposed and I feel ill prepared to design and/or assist with interventions.*
PBIS doesn't define my role as a counselor; it is a program that I use to assist with my role as a counselor. I feel that PBIS is more of an implemented tool that leads to other things. The changing role, effectiveness and accountability of the school counselor are overwhelming to grasp at current time. PBIS has been positive in that several of the above areas have not been limited to the role of only the school counselor.

Thus, it is the experience of the school counselors in this study that their role as a school counselor is not profoundly impacted by the implementation of SWPBIS. The collaborative approach of SWPBIS also has impacted the role of the school counselor by sharing the responsibility for implementing interventions geared at improving social and emotional functioning. One school counselor alluded to this by stating: in my building I do feel that we have a more concerted effort in working with students so some issues are no longer considered the "counselor's" responsibility. The item: “PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges” also did not reach agreement. One school counselor explained their decision to remain outside of agreement on this item by stating: Personal connection time between teachers and students has diminished due to structural changes to make room for interventions and more instruction time in math and English-Language Arts.

Another participant summed up the impact on their role as: PBIS has been positive in that several of the above areas have not been limited to the role of only the school counselor. As a high school counselor, PBIS doesn't always touch many aspects of our jobs unless we are on the PBIS team or directly involved somehow.

School counseling program. The item “PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program” did not reach agreement. This finding is not consistent with current research. Ockerman (2012) explains that both the models of
RtI [SWPBIS] and comprehensive developmental school counseling programs have a great deal of overlap. Since more student data is collected to inform SWPBIS implementation, the same data can be used to improve comprehensive school counseling programs. Ockerman (2012) described both RtI and comprehensive school counseling programs as “proactive, collaborative, data-driven, multi-tiered, and whole-child focused” (p. 4).

Likewise the item: “My school counseling programs are interconnected with SWPBIS efforts” did not reach agreement. However, the ASCA position statement on RtI indicates that “the RtI three-tiered framework aligns with the ASCA National Model: A Framework for School Counseling Programs that identifies responsive services based on the students’ level of risk (ASCA, 2005). Data-driven decision making is key in any current counseling program” (Ryan et al., 2011, p. 218). One school counselor responded to this item by indicating that their school counseling program was interconnected with SWPBIS efforts including targeted small counseling groups in particular.

Lastly, the item “PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts” did not reach agreement as well. Bradshaw (2013) indicated that bullying prevention should be made up of whole school prevention effort. Bradshaw encourages school staff to approach bullying prevention through SWPBIS by stating, “the ongoing data collection efforts through the PBIS framework can help identify where, when and for whom behavior problems, like bullying, are occurring” (p. 290).

**Use of time.** School counselor division of time is clearly defined in the ASCA National Model. Specifically, systemic support should account for 10-20% of a school counselor’s time by the ASCA national standards (ASCA, 2012). One school counselor
recounted the shift in her daily activities as a result of SWPBIS implementation by stating:

PBIS can be difficult to manage at times only for the fact that I serve on our steering committee but also am the chair of incentives. Our incentives committee has taken up the most time currently and in past years and has been the biggest obstacle initially to have teachers to buy in. We still have a great incentives program, but not all members of my committee are good about following through on tasks. That leaves more work for me. Right now there is some ineffectiveness with the overall incentives system.

Increased responsibilities for SWPBIS implementation accounted for the lack of agreement about items related to increased time for student support. One school counselor stated: I find that lack of time is the result of participating in PBIS. Another detailed the frustration of “wearing too many hats” as a result of SWPBIS implementation: There is a challenge in being an internal coach, district lead coach for RtI and staying on top of my school counseling duties.

The item “I have more time for students who really need to see me” did not reach agreement in round two or three. One school counselor simply stated: I never have enough time for students who need to see me. Student to counselor ratios continue to impact school counselor role in SWPBIS implementation. This is consistent with school counseling research (Lapan et al., 2012). One participant shared: I am the only counselor for over 630 kids - I see students who have the biggest crisis at the time.

Other items that pertain to school counselor time that did not reach agreement included: “I have more time to support students’ social and emotional growth,” “I have more time to support students’ academic growth,” and “I spend less time on disciplinary concerns.” The latter is consistent with research into the prevalence of reduced behavior incidents in a school implementing SWPBIS with fidelity (Scott & Barrett, 2008; Clonan et al., 2007).
Along the same vein, the item “I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts” did not reach agreement. One participant countered that: *I spend just as much time on conflict resolution. PBIS does not affect this issue.* At many schools, tier one interventions are designed to teach pro-social skills like conflict resolution in an effort to prevent violence and encourage students to form healthy relationships (Scott, Swain-Bradway, & Landers, 2007). These lessons can be taught by school counselors in guidance lessons or through an advisory program.

**Capacity addressing behavior.** Neither of the items highlighting an increased capacity in addressing student behavior suggested by participants in round one reached agreement in rounds two or three. School counselors did not agree with the statement that “My classroom management skills have improved” and “I am more consistent with my expectations of students.” Neither statement generated comments from school counselors. This finding is consistent with school counseling literature that suggests that school counselors, especially those who have not been classroom teachers, are not trained in classroom management skills and often do not feel comfortable with classroom management or student discipline (Geltner & Clark, 2005; Beaty-O’Ferrall, Greene, & Hanna, 2010).

**Capacity using data.** Though the use of data is central to both the effective implementation of SWPBIS (Sugai et al., 2008) and a main tenant of the ASCA National Model (ASCA, 2005, 2012), items pertaining to data collection did not reach agreement in this study. The item: “I collect data more regularly” generated these explanations: *I have less time as more has been added to my plate in this area and I am still very irregular in data collection as an individual.* School counselors working collaboratively
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may be more effective and efficient at collecting data (Martens & Andreen, 2013). In response to the item “I collect data more effectively and efficiently,” two comments were shared: *We collect data as a team and I do use PBIS data to plan my program.* These findings are consistent with Hawken, Vincent, & Schumann (2008) who found that PBIS teams have greater capacity to see how students respond to academic interventions.

Finally, in response to the item “Data provides direction for individual counseling” one school counselor indicated: *Data helps determine student need for individual counseling based on discipline referrals.*

**Capacity designing and implementing interventions.** Ryan et al. (2010) identified RtI as an opportunity for school counselors to take a lead role in designing and implementing effective interventions for students on their caseloads. Items in this category did not reach agreement during rounds two and three. School counselors did not agree that they were “more aware of which interventions work for my students” and did not “know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload.” The interest in learning these skills were clear in comments shared: *I am learning to progress monitor, I do not have an extensive knowledge of interventions, and I am just not familiar with these concepts. I consider this an area I really need to focus on.* Despite the fact that a similar item met agreement about student behavior, school counselors did not agree that “the PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning.” Perhaps the breakdown in capacity can be attributed to the fact that many school counselors are relegated to intervening with social and emotional concerns and not included in academic interventions (Brown & Trusty, 2005). However, in response to the item: “I am sought
School counselors did not agree that SWPBIS implementation made them “better equipped to design academic interventions, nor that “I am better equipped to design behavior interventions.” Ryan et al., (2011) highlights how SWPBIS is an opportunity for school counselors to take part in early intervention. One school counselor explained: *As far as top tier interventions, my role as a sub-committee member is reflected in goals of the new counselor evaluation.*

The use of an evidence-based behavior intervention is the centerpiece in Martens and Andreen’s recent study of school counselors implementing a tier two intervention with fidelity. Martens & Andreen (2013) suggested that:

School counselors’ knowledge and expertise on student issues, including mental health challenges that affect learning, make them an ideal component to the implementation of Check in Check out (CICO). School counselors can use data collected through the daily behavior report cards to identify triggers and barriers to effective learning (p. 9).

The need for training in the use of tier two interventions is reflected in the items that did not reach agreement in this study including: “I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.”

**Communication.** Three items that did not reach agreement related to communication include “We now have increased communication between staff members,” “We now have increased communication between staff members and students,” and “We now have increased communication between staff members and
parents.” SWPBIS implementation guidelines suggest the need for increased effectiveness for all stakeholders to ensure effective implementation (Turnbull et al., 2002; McIntosh et al., 2014). One school counselor shared that there has been an increase in electronic communication, but decreased teaming time among staff. Another indicated the importance of working closely with all invested adults and students in the school community in order to effectively implement SWPBIS by stating: It is important to communicate the vision and related goals with all educational stakeholders in order to have positive outcomes.

Summary. The experience of school counselors working in schools that are implementing SWPBIS with fidelity is varied. Of the original list of 142 schools, 57 (40%) had at least one school counselor on their implementation team. Participants in this study cited an improved capacity to address behavioral concerns and to collaborate with colleagues as the greatest benefits to their practices as school counselors. Implementing multi-tiered systems of support empowers school counselors and other educational and mental health professionals to look at problems systemically. Specialized training for school counselors and other members of implementation teams provides an opportunity for new and relevant learning about student behavior and data-based decision making, among other things.

School counselors have been said to be uniquely positioned to not only participate in effective SWPBIS implementation but also to take on a lead role (Curtis et al., 2010; Ryan et al., 2011). Curtis et al. (2010) outlined the fit by stating:

School counselor’s training in consultation, group facilitation, advocacy, and program implementation can be well utilized in a leadership role on an SWPBIS
team. Although implementing the program does require significant time and effort, the resulting improvements in behavior and suspensions evidenced by this particular [elementary] school can be an important ingredient in allowing professional school counselors the time needed to focus on building and maintaining thriving comprehensive school counseling programs (p. 5).

Ryan et al. (2011) echoes a similar sentiment:

The RtI service model has provided new opportunities for school counselors. As more schools and school districts move toward implementing RtI programs, school counselors should not only consider how their involvement in RtI can not only serve students but can build relationships with administrators, teachers, staff and parents (p. 220).

Ockerman et al. (2012) encouraged school counselors to join with the movement to approach prevention work in schools by creating a multi-tiered system. Ockerman states that, “the profession of school counseling has continuously evolved, its survival largely predicated on its ability to address educational reform movement and to define its role accordingly” (p. 3).

The overlap between school counselor expertise and the skills needed to implement an effective SWPBIS framework are many (Ryan et al., 2011). Researchers explain that “school counselors have rarely been seen as decision-makers in the school; thus, their role has historically been viewed as ancillary rather than central to the mission of the school (Paisley & Borders, 1995; Sears, 2002)” (in Ockerman et al., 2012 p. 3). Chief among the skills that a school counselor brings to the effort of making systemic and...
effective change in schools is their ability to build positive collaborative relationships with other professionals. School counselors have the skills to lead implementation and are able to help facilitate and sustain new systems of support in schools.

**Trustworthiness of the Study**

School counselors served as experts in this Delphi study. They were considered experts because they are working in schools where SWPBIS is implemented with fidelity. Some were part of the initial design and implementation; others joined the staff afterwards. All had access to institutional data about student outcomes such as demographic, academic achievement, attendance, discipline, high school completion rates, and college going rates.

School counselor participants in this study were encouraged to anonymously share their honest reflections when they considered the impact of SWPBIS on student outcomes, school climate, and their own professional effectiveness. The researcher did not guide survey responses in any way. This ensured that participants could write freely about their experiences (Rowe & Wright, 2011). In the second round, their responses were refined into a Likert-type questionnaire. School counselors were encouraged to answer this questionnaire honestly. Interquartile ranges were computed as the researcher attempted to find consensus and create subsequent questionnaires. Thus, quantitative values were assigned to the level of agreement about school counselors’ perceptions.

**Limitations**

Like all research methodologies, there are limitations to Delphi studies. Delphi research has “filled a deep need of academics and practitioners for structured ways of assessing and combining human judgment” (Rowe & Wright, 2011, p. 1489). Attrition of
participants may diminish the final product (Rowe & Wright, 2011). During the first round 81% of the original 32 participants filled out surveys. This percentage diminished over the course of the study with a slight increase in round three (the round two rate was 53%, the round three rate was 62.5%, and the round four rate was 40.6%). Sheehan (2001) found that average response rates for e-mailed surveys to be approximately 31%.

Research has repeatedly found that implementation fidelity has direct impact on key student outcomes including the number of ODRs (Flannery et al., 2013; Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf; 2010). There are multiple factors that impact implementation fidelity including staff turn-over. According to one respondent: Since its implementation we have had a large staff turnover, PBIS has required that teachers manage more misbehaviors before referring them, and each class of students bring with it their own personalities and issues. Another school counselor shared: One of the most difficult things to deal with is new teacher buy in- there are some who feel that we should not reward students for doing what others already do, and have a difficulty seeing how it will impact their classroom. We also have some teachers who use the matrix and expectations regularly who do not give the reward tokens to students.

The results reflect the opinions and perceptions of expert school counselors (Milsom & Dietz, 2009). This study emphasizes school counselors’ perceptions of changes that are the direct result of SWPBIS implementation. In most schools, several initiatives are in place and could have direct effect on student outcomes, school climate, and school counselor effectiveness. Thus, responses to the Delphi study reflected opinions about causality but do not serve as definitive statements of causality. Opinions of experts are also subject to change over time. Some respondents seemed challenged to
tease out if the results they saw could be attributed solely to SWPBIS because of the presence of multiple interventions: *Our school is continually improving; however, it's hard to determine if it's all due to SWPBIS since we are also implementing some academic interventions that probably contribute to the improvements.* Another respondent said something similar: *I'm not always sure how much is due to PBIS or how much is due to other RtI strategies put in place over the past through years.*

Hasson, Keeney & McKenna (2000) have stated that researchers employing the Delphi method accept that the research yields consensus and not fact. What is generated instead is a “snap shot of expert opinion, for that group at a particular time, which can be used to inform thinking, practice or theory” (Hasson, et al., 2000, p. 1701).

**Conclusion**

This study represents an important dialogue about school counselors’ roles in multi-tiered interventions in schools. The results of this study may indicate that there is a continuum of learning about multi-tiered supports for all educators, including school counselors. Hawken, Vincent, and Schumann (2008) observed that schools are just now becoming fluent in the use of data to monitor literacy growth. Schools need to cultivate the same fluency with social behavior.

In addition, the items that reached agreement might suggest that the groundwork for change exists in their respective schools, but that complete and sustainable systemic change requires more time. The student outcomes that reached agreement might motivate school counselors to continue their implementation efforts or encourage those considering implementation of SWPBIS. Though few of the items related to school counselor professional effectiveness reached agreement, it is relevant that the two items
that reached agreement point to increased capacity to manage student behavior and to collaborate with fellow stakeholders to coordinate both academic and behavioral interventions. Perhaps greater emphasis needs to be placed on these areas in pre-service school counselor programs.

As mentioned earlier, implementation is a process that takes three to five years (Molly et al., 2013). One school counselor encouraged others to give it the time it needs: *I think giving PBIS a chance to work and taking time to develop it will eventually lead to greater effectiveness and staff and student buy-in.* Another school counselor summed up their experience implementing in a high school by stating: *PBIS is a great program but I do find it challenging to run at the high school level. It is challenging to come up with rewards that high school students will be motivated by. We are constantly looking for new and innovative ways to promote positive behavior. I do see tremendous value in the message that it sends and [I] am looking forward to the continued development of our program. We also make sure we recognize staff as well. I believe PBIS is only successful when the staff is on board and sees the value in the program.*

Frustration with implementation was a common theme in school counselors’ comments. One stated: *Those items that did not reach agreement made me feel a little better, that others were in the same situation (or similar) to the one I am in. I appreciate knowing this.* Reduction in resources may also sideline implementation. One school counselor explains: *Overall, I would consider our PBIS implementation to be “marginal” at best as far as positive results. Mostly because, due to a lack of state governmental funding, we simply do NOT have enough staff to meet all of the students’ needs.*
The shared mission of SWPBIS and comprehensive school counseling programs are closely related. Both RtI/SWPBIS and comprehensive school counseling programs promote the same ideals (Ockerman et al., 2012). Both are designed to promote equity and access to quality instruction for all students. Both include the use of behavior supports and proactive interventions to promote student achievement (Ockerman et al., 2012).

**Implications for school counselors**

There are indications that proliferation of multi-tiered systems of support for academic and behavior will continue in the foreseeable future. As of March 2012, 14 states legally required RtI; the states include Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, and West Virginia. All other states (with the exception of three) provided state level RtI guidance documents on their website in support of implementation (Zirkel, 2011; Ockerman et al., 2012). However, if the momentum to bring PBIS to all schools gains ground, both practicing and pre-service school counselors will need to know how to effectively design and maintain a multi-tiered systems of academic and behavioral support in their schools.

Another implication for school counselors that could be concluded from this study is the need for training in multi-tiered approach and specific evidence-based interventions. There was a lack of agreement about many items in this study that referred to capacity in designing and implementing specific evidence-based interventions. Perhaps this points to a need to provide more extensive professional development and training for
practicing school counselors and revamping curriculum for pre-service school counselors.

**Future Research**

The results of this study may indicate that school counselors’ perceptions of implementation fidelity varies among schools with relatively strong scores on the SET and the BoQ. School counselors are pulled in many different directions professionally and their time is highly impacted by changes in educational initiatives (House & Hayes, 2002). The school counselors that participated in this study represent a group of professionals from the field that are attempting to balance their current responsibilities with new tasks assigned because of SWPBIS implementation.

Many studies have explored the importance of implementation fidelity (Durlak & Dupree, 2008; Dusenbury et al., 2003; Fixsen et al., 2005). Researchers have found that there are many contextual factors that impact implementation (Bradshaw et al., 2009; Dowmitrovitch et al, 2008; Payne et al., 2006). Sustainability of implementation of a school-wide approach is the subject of many SWPBIS studies (McIntosh et al., 2013; Molloy et al., 2013; Kincaid et al., 2007). Bradshaw et al., 2009 found that “analysis indicated that the effects tended to be the greatest around 3 years post-training” (p. 103). Implementation barriers and facilitators were identified in 5,000 schools by Kincaid et al. (2007). They found schools that implemented with low fidelity experienced practical and operational barriers such as working as a team, collecting data, and developing reward systems. Those implementing with high fidelity were more apt to experience systemic barriers such as obtaining staff buy-in, administrative support, district level support and funding. High fidelity schools indicated that they were confident barriers could be
overcome by working with their state PBIS coordinators and technical assistants (Kincaid, et al., 2007).

Future research into school counselor involvement in SWPBIS should quantify capacity in discrete skills such as data collection, data analysis, use of evidence-based interventions, and classroom management to generate a more robust research base (Curtis et al., 2010). Tracking time allotted to each school counselor task before and after implementation could point to a shift in role as a result of SWPBIS framework. Lastly, it might be important to compare key student outcomes before and after implementation (i.e., attendance, ODRs, suspensions, bullying incidents, graduation rates, and college going rates). Aarons and Sawitzy (2006) found that a high-quality of implementation of PBIS and enhancements in the school’s climate also increased the capacity of the staff and school environment to implement other preventative interventions for children not responding to the universal model (Aarons & Sawitzy, 2006). Their research suggests that effective implementation of SWPBIS can increase the professional capacity of all educators involved, including school counselors. Future research might “address the extent to which school teams have the capacity and knowledge to respond to academic and behavior data to design interventions and efficiently and continuously evaluate outcomes of those interventions” (Hawken et al., 2008, p. 221).

Further research might also uncover the difference between the years of experience of school counselors implementing SWPBIS in elementary, middle and high schools. Likewise, there appears to be differences in the outcomes of implementations in urban, suburban and rural schools (Netzel & Eber, 2003; Lassen, Steel, & Sailor, 2006; Warren et al., 2003). Finally, research into the impact of school counselor to student
ratios on effective implementation of SWPBIS might provide essential information to school personnel planning to institute this school-wide approach.

Future Delphi studies with other stakeholders including school social workers, school psychologists, school-based marriage and family therapists, administrators, general educators, special educators, students, and parents might also be helpful in order to get a sense of each professional groups' perceptions of SWPBIS implementation. Finally, the collaborative nature of SWPBIS implementation and its importance for sustaining multi-tiered systems of support is important to current and future school counselors. Collaborating with professional colleagues and community agencies has always been of great import to school counselors (Hobbs & Collison, 1995).
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SCHOOL COUNSELORS’ PERCEPTIONS OF SWPBIS


Appendix A

Participant Recruitment Letter/E-mail

Principal Investigator: Rachelle Perusse, Ph.D.
Student Researcher: Peg Donohue EdM
Title of Study: School Counselors’ Perceptions of SWPBIS Implementation

Dear,
You have been identified as an expert in the field of SWPBIS Implementation because you serve on a leadership team at a school that is implementing with high fidelity. I am conducting a research study to find out about your perceptions of changes to
your student outcomes, school climate and professional effectiveness after implementing SWPBIS. In order to obtain results that are representative of experts across the country, it is important that your thoughts and opinions are included in this research. Your participation in this study will first require the completion of a three-item open ended questionnaire. These questions will be sent to you via a Google Forms survey link. This should take approximately 15-30 minutes to complete, depending on the detail of your responses. All participant responses will be compiled and created into a survey in round 2. You will then be contacted again, and asked to rate your degree of agreement with the group responses in round 3. This should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Once those responses are collected, you will be given the same survey, this time with statistical information about the group's level of agreement, and you will be asked to rate your responses. This should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. In round four you will see the results and have a final opportunity to comment. This should take about 10-15 minutes to complete.

This is considered Delphi methodology and is used to create an expert consensus about a particular topic. Please review the attached information sheet for more information.

You will not be asked to provide any identifying information throughout this study. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties.

We believe there are no known risks of associated with this study; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete this study. If you are interested in participating in this study, please send a confirmation e-mail to pdonohue47@live.com within one week. Peg will then send you a link to the first round of this study.

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to answer for any reason. I will be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Peg Donohue at pdonohue47@live.com. You may also contact my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Perusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Thank you,
Peg Donohue, Ed.M
Candidate for PhD in Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Connecticut
249 Glenbrook Road, Unit 2064
Appendix B

Information Sheet for
SWPBIS Survey for School Counselors

University of Connecticut
Introduction

You are invited to participate in this survey of school counselors’ perceptions of SWPBIS implementation. I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Connecticut, and I am conducting this survey as part of my dissertation. I am interested in finding out what school counselors perceive about changes to student outcomes, school climate, and their professional effectiveness in light of their involvement with SWPBIS implementation. You are being asked to participate as an expert because you are a leader in a school that has successfully implemented SWPBIS over time.

What are the study procedures? What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be among a group of experts working to achieve consensus on student outcomes, changes to school climate and changes to professional effectiveness after implementing SWPBIS. The procedures will have the features of a focus group, however, you will be able to participate anonymously and in your own home or school location. We will receive expert participation from different regions of the country using a group-based process, and will provide feedback allowing participants to reassess their initial beliefs with information provided from previous iterations. While the researchers will know your identity, the group of expert participants will not know each others’ identities or locations.

In the first round of this Delphi study, you will be provided with three open-ended questions regarding student outcomes, school climate and professional effectiveness. The first question will reference student outcomes, the second will reference school climate and the third will reference professional effectiveness. It is expected that this round will take you approximately 15-20 minutes to complete depending on the detail of your responses. You will be able to start, stop/break, and start again at your convenience. You will be given one week to complete this first round. All participant responses will be compiled and created into a survey. There will be one week given for each of the four rounds to be completed. The span of the data collection should be 5 weeks. Reminder emails will be sent to you the day before a response is due. Since each survey should take participants 15-20 minutes to complete, the composite of 1-1.5 hours will be needed to take part in this study.

The initial survey will have 3 open-ended questions. Surveys 2, 3, and 4 will have questions about items that did not reach agreement or consensus. Thus, each successive survey will be shorter than the previous.
In the second round, the researchers will provide you and the other expert participants with a summary of responses regarding changes to student outcomes, school climate and professional effectiveness in light of SWPBIS implementation. You will be asked to complete a Likert scaled survey and to accept, reject or modify the statements. It is expected that this round will take you approximately 15-30 minutes to complete. As in round 1, you will have flexibility to complete round 2 at your convenience, within one week.

Round 3 will be similar to round 2. You will be given the same survey as in round two, but this time with statistical information about the group’s level of agreement will be included, and you will be asked to rerate your responses. This should take approximately 15-30 minutes to complete.

In the 4th and final round, the researchers will compare individual ranks with the mean score. You will be asked to rerate only the items that have not reached consensus one final time. A summary of changes in student outcomes, school climate and professional effectiveness will be provided to you and the other expert participants for a final opportunity to revise judgments if necessary.

It is anticipated to take a total of five weeks to complete the study and gain group consensus from the expert participants. During this time, you have the flexibility to complete each round at your convenience. In each of the one-week time periods per round, it is anticipated that will take you a total of 15-30 minutes to complete the task (i.e., open-ended questions, accept/reject/clarify statements, rank order priorities).

Neither audio nor videotaping procedures will be used.

What are the risks or inconveniences of the study?

We believe there are no known risks associated with this research study; however, a possible inconvenience may be the time it takes to complete the study.

What are the benefits of the study?

You may not directly benefit from this research; however, we hope that your expert participation in the study may inform counselor educators and policy makers of the impact of SWPBIS implementation on student outcomes, school climate, and professional effectiveness of school counselors.

Will I receive payment for participation? Are there costs to participate?
There are not costs and you will not be paid to be in this study.

How will my personal information be protected?

You will not be asked to provide any identifying information throughout this study. Your responses will be not be linked to your name, email address, or any other identifiable information. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties.

At the conclusion of this study, the researchers may publish their findings. Information will be presented in summary format and you will not be identified in any publications or presentations.

You should also know that the UConn Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Office of Research Compliance may inspect study records as part of its auditing program, but these reviews will only focus on the researchers and not on your responses or involvement. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

Can I stop being in the study and what are my rights?

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in the study, but later change your mind, you may drop out at any time. There are no penalties or consequences of any kind if you decide that you do not want to participate.

Additionally, you do not have to answer any question that you do not want to answer throughout the questionnaire and/or surveys of this study.

Whom do I contact if I have questions about the study?

Take as long as you like before you make a decision. We will be happy to answer any question you have about this study. If you have further questions about this study or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact the principal investigator, Dr. Rachelle Pérusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu or the student researcher, Margaret Donohue at pdonohue47@live.com. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Connecticut Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 860-486-8802. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.
Appendix C

Round One Email

Dear _________________________,

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in the study “Implementing SWPBIS: School Counselor Perceptions of Student Outcomes, School Climate and Professional Effectiveness.” Below is the link to round one of the survey. Round one
consists of three open-ended questions and will be open until February 13, 2014 at 11:59 pm.

Round two of the survey will be distributed shortly after this first round closes.

Again, thank you so much for your participation in this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at pdonohue47@live.com, or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Perusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu.

Sincerely,

Peg Donohue, EdM
Candidate for PhD in Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Connecticut
249 Glenbrook Road, Unit 2064
Storrs, Connecticut 06269-2064

Appendix D
Round One Survey

School Counselors' Perceptions of PBIS/RtI Implementation: Survey 1
Round One Survey:
School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Survey
Thank you very much for participating in the Delphi study about the impact of implementing PBIS/RtI. Your time is greatly appreciated. Round One will be open from now until February 13 at 11:59 pm.

Please note that you do not need to answer any of these questions if you do not want. This study has been approved by the University of Connecticut IRB (IRB Exemption #X14-009).

Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the internet by any third parties.

If you should have any questions about this survey, please contact the student researcher, Peg Donohue at pdonohue47@live.com.

Please respond to the following questions:

* Required

**How long have you been a school counselor?**

*Check all that apply.*

0-5 years
6-10 years
11-15 years
16-20 years
21+ years

**What is your gender?**

*Check all that apply.*

Male
Female

**Which best describes your school**

*Check all that apply.*

Middle School
High School
Middle and High School

**Which best describes your setting?**

*Check all that apply.*

Urban
Suburban
Rural

**What state do you work in?**
Check all that apply:
- Connecticut
- Florida
- Michigan
- North Carolina
- Wisconsin

What specific changes have you observed in outcomes for your students since your school implemented PBIS/RtI? *
You may answer this in bullet points or complete sentences. Use the format that works best for you.
- 
- 
- 
- 

What specific changes have you observed in your school climate since your school implemented PBIS/RtI? *
You may answer this in bullet points or complete sentences. Use the format that works best for you.
- 
- 
- 
- 

In what way(s) has implementing PBIS/RtI at your school impacted your effectiveness as a school counselor? *
You may answer this in bullet points or complete sentences. Use the format that works best for you.
- 
- 
- 
- 

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Appendix E

Round Two Email

Dear School Counselor,
Thank you very much for participating in round one of the "School Counselors’ Perceptions of PBIS Implementation" study.

Below is the link to round two of the survey.

Round two consists of 65 Likert scale items that represent all of the participants’
responses to the round one questions. This should take 20 minutes or less to complete. Space is provided for any additional comments you may have. Round two will be open for responses from now until 11:59pm on Thursday, February 27th.

Round three of the survey will be distributed as soon as possible pending compilation of the round two data. Again, thank you so much for your participation in this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at pdonohue47@live.com, or my doctoral advisor, Dr. Rachelle Perusse at rachelle.perusse@uconn.edu.

Sincerely,

Peg Donohue, Ed. M.
Candidate for PhD in Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Connecticut
249 Glenbrook Road, Unit 2064
Storrs, Connecticut 06269-2064

Appendix F
Round Two Survey

School Counselors’ Perceptions of PBIS: Round Two Survey

These items were derived from Round One Survey results. Thank you very much for participating in this Delphi study about school counselors’ perceptions of PBIS. Your time is greatly appreciated. Round two of this study will be open until Thursday February 27 at 11:59 pm. Please note that you do not need to answer any questions if you do not
The following 14 items have been identified as school counselors’ perceptions of changes to student outcomes that result from PBIS implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with the items below. 

As a result of PBIS implementation:

1. Student attendance has improved.
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

2. Tardiness has decreased.
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

3. There are fewer incidents of bullying.
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

4. Individual learning needs are better met.
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

5. Student behavior in hallways has improved.
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

6. Students are more motivated to behave.
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
7. I notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. There are more opportunities for students to be mentored. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. Students have a more positive connection to school. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. Students have a more positive connection to teachers. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. There has been a reduction in suspensions. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. There has been a reduction in failing grades. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. Students spend more time in class. 

Mark only one oval. 

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Do you have any additional comments about changes to student outcomes at your school as a result of PBIS implementation?
The following 11 items have been identified as school counselors’ perceptions of changes to school climate that result from PBIS implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with the items below. Level of agreement - School Climate

As a result of PBIS implementation:

15. **We have a calmer, more positive overall climate.**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

16. **Students are more prepared to learn.**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

17. **Our school is more welcoming.**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

18. **Our students have more school spirit.**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

19. **Students are more accepting of each other.**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

20. **Students are more respectful of teachers.**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

21. **Staff are on “the same page” about student behavior.**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

22. **Teachers regularly give students specific praise.**
23. I notice greater mutual respect amongst teachers.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

24. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing Common Core).

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

25. We experience increased staff collaboration.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

26. Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Do you have any additional comments about changes to your school climate as result of PBIS implementation?

- 

- 

The following 32 items have been identified as school counselors’ perceptions of changes in their professional effectiveness that result from PBIS implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with the items below. Level of agreement - Professional Effectiveness

As a result of PBIS implementation:

27. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

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<td>23. I notice greater mutual respect amongst teachers.</td>
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<td>24. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing Common Core).</td>
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<td>25. We experience increased staff collaboration.</td>
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<td>26. Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.</td>
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Do you have any additional comments about changes to your school climate as result of PBIS implementation?

- 

- 

The following 32 items have been identified as school counselors’ perceptions of changes in their professional effectiveness that result from PBIS implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with the items below. Level of agreement - Professional Effectiveness

As a result of PBIS implementation:

27. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

29. I am better at acknowledging students.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

30. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

31. My classroom management skills have improved.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

32. I am more consistent with my expectations of students.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

33. I have more time for students who really need to see me.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

34. I have more time to support students’ social and emotional growth.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

35. I have more time to support students’ academic growth.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

36. I collect data more regularly.

Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
### 37. I am using data more consistently and effectively.

*Mark only one oval.*

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### 38. I am more aware of which interventions work for my students.

*Mark only one oval.*

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### 39. I know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload.

*Mark only one oval.*

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### 40. The PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning.

*Mark only one oval.*

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### 41. I am sought after more for assistance with interventions.

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### 42. I am better equipped to design academic interventions.

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### 43. I am better equipped to design behavior interventions.

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### 44. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions.

*Mark only one oval.*

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### 45. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions.
46. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.

Mark only one oval.

47. I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior.

Mark only one oval.

48. I spend less time on disciplinary concerns.

Mark only one oval.

49. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts.

Mark only one oval.

50. There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all students at my school.

Mark only one oval.

51. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges.

Mark only one oval.

52. We now have increased communication between staff members.

Mark only one oval.

53. We now have increased communication between staff members and students.
54. We now have increased communication between staff members and parents.

55. My developmental guidance lessons are interconnected with PBIS efforts.

56. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts.

57. PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts.

58. Data provides ability to create small counseling groups to address specific types of behaviors.

59. Data provides direction for individual counseling.

Do you have any additional comments about changes to your professional effectiveness as a result of PBIS implementation?

- 
- 
- 
- 

These final 6 items have been identified as school counselors’ perceptions.
of challenges that result from PBIS implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with the items below. Level of agreement - Challenges to PBIS Implementation

As a result of PBIS implementation:

60. I am less effective because implementation has put me at odds with teachers.

*Mark only one oval.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

61. Teachers are angry I am asking them to do interventions.

*Mark only one oval.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

62. I find PBIS difficult for me to manage.

*Mark only one oval.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

63. I am not more effective because I still have a high student to counselor ratio.

*Mark only one oval.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

64. There is a lack of staff “buy in.”

*Mark only one oval.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

65. We lack the resources to fully implement PBIS.

*Mark only one oval.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Do you have any additional comments about challenges to PBIS implementation?

- 
- 
-
What type of school do you work in?

Check all that apply.

- Middle School
- High School
- Middle/High School

What setting do you work in?

Check all that apply.

- Urban
- Rural
- Suburban

Thank you for taking time to complete this survey!
Thank you very much for participating in round two of the “School Counselors’ Perceptions of PBIS Study.” Based on these results, round three has been assembled. You will be asked to rate all items that have not yet reached participant agreement.

Round three consists of 57 Likert scale items. This should take 15-20 minutes to complete. Space is provided below each item to explain reasons you have for remaining outside of agreement. Round three will be open from now until 11:59pm on Sunday, March 9, 2014.

The final round will provide you with a list of all items that school counselors agreed upon and those that remained outside of agreement.

Again, thank you for your assistance with this study.

Sincerely,
Peg Donohue

Peg Donohue, Ed. M
Candidate for PhD in Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Connecticut
249 Glenbrook Road, Unit 2064
Storrs, Connecticut 06269-2064

Appendix H

Round Three Survey

School Counselors’ Perceptions of PBIS/RTI: Round Three Survey
Thank you very much for participating in this Delphi study about school
counselors' perceptions of of PBIS/RtI. Your time is greatly appreciated. Round three of this study will be open from now until Sunday, March 9, 2014 at 11:59pm. Please note that you do not need to answer any questions if you do not want. This study has been approved by the University of Connecticut IRB (IRB Exemption #X14-009). Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. If you should have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact student researcher, Peg Donohue at pdonohue47@live.com. For round three of the study, you will be asked to rate your level of agreement with the response, just as you did in round two, with the items that have not yet reached agreement. For the purposes of this study, agreement is defined as a median of 6 or 7 AND an interquartile range of 1.5 or less. The median is calculated by arranging all of the response scores from lowest to highest and finding the middle score. The interquartile range is the numerical difference between the middle 50% of scores. Therefore, and interquartile range of 1.00 or less suggests that the middle 50% of participants responded in a similar way. A larger interquartile range signifies greater variation in responses. For round three, you will note that the median and interquartile range is indicated below each item. You will also have a space to comment, if you would like, to explain why you are remaining outside of agreement on any item. There are 57 items in this round and it should take you 15-20 minutes to complete.

Level of Agreement - Student Outcomes
The following 10 items have been identified as school counselors' perceptions of changes to student outcomes that result from PBIS implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement on a scale of:

1 - Strongly Disagree
2 - Disagree
3 - Somewhat Disagree
4 - Neutral
5 - Somewhat Agree
6 - Agree
7 - Strongly Agree

As a result of PBIS/RtI implementation:

1. Student attendance has improved.
   Median = 4; Interquartile range = 1
   Mark only one oval.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

2. Tardiness has decreased.
   Median = 4; Interquartile range = 1
   Mark only one oval.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Comment 3. There are fewer incidents of bullying.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment 4. Individual learning needs are better met.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment 5. Students are more motivated to behave.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 0
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment 6. Students have a more positive connection to school.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment 7. There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals.
Median = 6; Interquartile range = 2
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment 8. There has been a reduction in suspensions.
Median = 6; Interquartile range = 2
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment 9. There has been a reduction in failing grades.
Median = 4; Interquartile range = 2
Mark only one oval.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. Students spend more time in class  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7  

Comment  

Level of Agreement - School Climate  

The following 10 items have been identified as school counselors' perceptions of changes to school climate as a result of PBIS/RtI implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following items.  

11. Students are more prepared to learn.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7  

Comment  

12. Our students have more school spirit.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7  

Comment  

13. Students are more accepting of each other.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7  

Comment  

14. Students are more respectful of teachers  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7  

Comment  

15. Staff are on "the same page" about student behavior.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Comment

16. Teachers regularly give students specific praise.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1
Mark only one oval.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

17. I notice greater mutual respect amongst teachers.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1
Mark only one oval.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

18. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing Common Core).
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1
Mark only one oval.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

19. We experience increased staff collaboration.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
Mark only one oval.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

20. Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
Mark only one oval.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

Level of Agreement - Professional Effectiveness

The following 31 items have been identified as school counselors' perceptions of changes to their professional effectiveness as a result of PBIS/RtI.
implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following items.

21. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.
   Median = 4; Interquartile range = 1
   Mark only one oval.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   Comment

22. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1
   Mark only one oval.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   Comment

23. I am better at acknowledging students.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   Comment

24. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   Comment

25. My classroom management skills have improved.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   Comment

26. I am more consistent with my expectations of students.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 0.25
   Mark only one oval.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   Comment

27. I have more time for students who really need to see me.
   Median = 4; Interquartile range = 3
Comment

28. I have more time to support students' social and emotional growth.  
Median = 4; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

29. I have more time to support students' academic growth.  
Median = 4; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

30. I collect data more regularly.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

31. I am using data more consistently and effectively.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

32. I am more aware of which interventions work with my students.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

33. I know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Comment

34. The PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

35. I am sought after more for assistance with interventions.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 3
   Mark only one oval.
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

36. I am better equipped to design academic interventions.
   Median = 4; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

37. I am better equipped to design behavior interventions.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

38. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 3
   Mark only one oval.
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

39. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions.
   Median = 5; Interquartile range = 3
   Mark only one oval.
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
40. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

41. I spend less time on disciplinary concerns.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

42. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 3  
Mark only one oval.  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

43. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1  
Mark only one oval.  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

44. We now have increased communication between staff members.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

45. We now have increased communication between staff members and students.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Comment

46. We now have increased communication between staff members and
parents.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

47. My developmental guidance lessons are interconnected with PBIS efforts.  
Median = 4.5; Interquartile range = 1.5  
Mark only one oval.  
1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

48. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1  
Mark only one oval.  
1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

49. PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

50. Data provides ability to create small groups to address specific types of behaviors.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 2  
Mark only one oval.  
1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

51. Data provides direction for individual counseling.  
Median = 5; Interquartile range = 1  
Mark only one oval.  
1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

Level of Agreement - Challenges to PBIS Implementation
The following 6 items have been identified as school counselors’ perceptions of challenges to PBIS implementation. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following items.

52. I am less effective because implementation has put me at odds with teachers.
   Median = 2; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

53. Teachers are angry I am asking them to do interventions.
   Median = 3; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

54. I find PBIS difficult for me to manage.
   Median = 2; Interquartile range = 2
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

55. I am not more effective because I still have a high student to counselor ratio.
   Median = 4; Interquartile range = 3
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

56. There is a lack of staff "buy in."
   Median = 3; Interquartile range = 2.25
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment

57. We lack the resources to fully implement PBIS
   Median = 2.5; Interquartile range = 3
   Mark only one oval.
   
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Comment
58. What type of school do you work in?

Check all that apply.

_______ Middle School
_______ High School
_______ Middle/High School

59. What setting do you work in?

Check all that apply.

_______ Urban
_______ Rural
_______ Suburban

Thank you for taking time to fill out this survey.

Appendix I

Round Four Email

Dear School Counselors,

Thank you very much for participating in round three of the “School Counselors’ Perceptions of PBIS Study.” You will see lists of the items that reached agreement (a median of 6 and an IQR of 1.5 or less) and those that did not. You will have an opportunity to comment on these items. Share what you are in accord with and what
surprises you.

Round four consists of 7 open-ended questions. This should take 15-20 minutes to complete. Round three will be open from now until 11:59pm on Monday, March 17, 2014.

Once completed, I will share a link to my dissertation.

Again, thank you for your assistance with this study. I wish you continued success.

Sincerely,
Peg Donohue

Peg Donohue, Ed. M.
Candidate for PhD in Counselor Education & Counseling Psychology
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Connecticut
249 Glenbrook Road, Unit 2064
Storrs, Connecticut 06269-2064
Thank you very much for participating in this Delphi study about school counselors' perceptions of PBIS/RtI. Your time is greatly appreciated. Round four of this survey is the final round. The purpose is to share with you the items that reached agreement amongst the participants in the survey, those that did not, and to provide a final opportunity for you to share your comments. There are seven comment boxes in this survey. Round four will be open from now until March 17, 2014 at 11:59pm.

Please note that you do not need to answer any questions if you do not want. This study has been approved by the University of Connecticut IRB (IRB Exemption #X14-009). Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. If you should have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact the student researcher, Peg Donohue atpdonohue47@live.com.

Again, thank you for your assistance with this study.

**Level of Agreement - Student Outcomes**

The following items reached agreement and indicate shared school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in student outcomes as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Student behavior in hallways has improved.
2. I notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions.
3. There are more opportunities for students to be mentored.
4. Students have a more positive connection to teachers.
5. Students have a more positive connection to school.
6. Students spend more time in class.

1. Please share any comments about this list of items that reached agreement:
The following items DID NOT reach agreement and pertain to school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in student outcomes as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Student attendance has improved.
2. Tardiness has decreased.
3. There are fewer incidents of bullying.
4. Individual learning needs are better met.
5. Students are more motivated to behave.
6. There has been a reduction in failing grades.
7. There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals.
8. There has been a reduction in suspensions.

2. Please share any comments about this list of items that DID NOT reach agreement:

**Level of Agreement - School Climate**

The following items reached agreement and indicate shared school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in school climate as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Our school is more welcoming.
2. We have a calmer, more positive overall climate.

3. Please share any comments about this list of items that reached agreement:
The following items DID NOT reach agreement and pertain to school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in school climate as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. Students are more prepared to learn.
2. Our students have more school spirit.
3. Students are more accepting of each other.
4. Students are more respectful of teachers.
5. Teachers regularly give students specific praise.
6. Staff are "on the same page" about student behavior.
7. I notice greater mutual respect among teachers
8. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing the Common Core).
9. We experience increased staff collaboration.
10. Consistent behavioral expectations district-wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.

4. Please share any comments about this list of items that DID NOT reach agreement:

Level of Agreement - Professional Effectiveness

The following items reached agreement and indicate shared school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in their professional effectiveness as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior.
2. There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all children in my school.

5. Please share any comments about this list of items that reached agreement:

The following items DID NOT reach agreement and pertain to school counselors' perceptions of observed changes in their professional effectiveness as a result of implementing PBIS:

1. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.
2. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program.
3. I am better at acknowledging students.
4. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues.
5. My classroom management skills have improved.
6. I am more consistent with my expectations of students.
7. I have more time for students who really need to see me.
8. I have more time to support students' social and emotional growth.
9. I have more time to support students' academic growth.
10. I collect data more regularly.
11. I am using data more consistently and effectively.
12. I am more aware of which interventions work for my students.
13. I know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload.
14. The PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning. 15. I am sought after more for assistance with interventions.

16. I am better equipped to design academic interventions.

17. I am better equipped to design behavior interventions.

18. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions.

19. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions.

20. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.

21. I spend less time on disciplinary concerns.

22. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts.

23. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges.

24. We now have increased communication between staff members.

25. We now have increased communication between staff members and students.

26. We now have increased communication between staff members and parents.

27. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts. 28. PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts.

29. Data provides direction for individual counseling.

6. Please share any comments about this list of items that DID NOT reach agreement:

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________
Final Comments

7. Do you have any final comments about implementing SWPBIS at your school or about participating in this study that you would like to share?

- 

Thank you for taking time to participate in this study! Your time and efforts are greatly appreciated!

Submit

 Appendix K

Compilation of Round One Open-Ended Responses

Question 1: Compilation of Round One Open-Ended Responses about Student Outcomes as a result of SWPBIS implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Participant Response</th>
<th># of respondents with same response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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Edit this form
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Attendance has improved.</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tardies have decreased.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>Reduction in failing grades.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individualized attention through mentorship has given some student a positive and personal connection to school.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More time spent in class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual learning needs are better met.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student test scores are monitored, appropriate interventions or supports are designed, and increased scores have been noted.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>Reduction in office discipline referrals (ODRs).</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction in suspensions.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bullying policies are more consistently enforced</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fewer bullying incidents</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved hallway behavior.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improved behavior in unstructured settings.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students know behavior expectations and rules.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We now have a streamlined and consistent method for reporting negative behavior.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adults in the building are now on the “same page” regarding behavior.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is no discrepancy in terms of what is required of students. All are treated the same.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Greater consistency in building wide enforcement of rules.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition and rewards</td>
<td>As adults acknowledge positive behavior in students, their behavior improves.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kids appreciate being recognized for positive behaviors.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students seem motivated to behave better.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most students want to be involved in what PBIS stands for. They relate to the positive support.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Students’ morale has improved because they are acknowledged and recognized.**

**Staff and student relationships**

I notice more positive student and adult interactions.

There is more school spirit.

**Challenges**

There have not been many positive student outcomes as a result of implementing PBIS.

Sometimes our hands are tied when a student with behavioral challenges is “in process” and we can only go as fast as the interventions will allow.

---

**Question 2: Compilation of Round One Open-Ended Responses about School Climate as a result of SWPBIS implementation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Participant Response</th>
<th># of respondents with same response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall climate of school</td>
<td>We now have a calmer school climate.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our school climate is more positive.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hallways are quiet and orderly during passing time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fighting has decreased significantly.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rewards and encouragement have improved the climate a great deal.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kids are ready to learn.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students enjoy having input into what activities and rewards are offered.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase in celebrations for the students for positive behavior.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition from building to building.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After four to five years of implementation, our school climate has improved.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific behaviors have improved.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have focused on making the entire school more welcoming.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I think that, without PBIS, the climate would have been far more negative.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student to</strong></td>
<td>There is a more positive climate among students.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>student</strong></td>
<td>There is a “kinder spirit” amongst students. They are more accepting of each other.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>interactions</strong></td>
<td>Students are willing to go out of their way for each other more.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students are ready and interested in activities that enhance their interpersonal self.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students are more respectful of each other.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff to student</strong></td>
<td>Students are more respectful of teachers.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>interactions</strong></td>
<td>Students feel more connected to teachers.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students feel more connected to the school.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers realize that being positive is not enough. They need to give specific praise for behaviors they are attempting to increase.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff interact and respond to students in a more positive manner. This is a huge “mind shift.”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff actively reteach and acknowledge positive behavior.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff to staff</strong></td>
<td>We all use the same language with kids.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>interactions</strong></td>
<td>We all have the same expectations.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff has become more positive as we have focused on looking for the positives in our students instead of always focusing on the negatives.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consistency of PBIS/RtI best practices helps us to be on the “same page” with each other.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We are a united staff as we promote a respectful, responsible and safe environment.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stress is reduced for staff because they know that all staff members have the same expectations for students.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (i.e. Common Core State Standards implementation).</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff are collaborating more regarding school-wide behavioral incentives and programs.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff are more positive with each other.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is an increase in mutual respect between staff.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges</strong></td>
<td>Teachers are angry that I am asking them to do interventions.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our school climate has not been largely impacted because we do not have resources to fully implement PBIS.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 3: Compilation of Round One Open-Ended Responses about Changes in Professional Effectiveness as a Result of SWPBIS implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcategory</th>
<th>Participant Response</th>
<th># of respondents with same response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role of school counselor</td>
<td>It has better defined the role of school counselor.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>Increased my structure with being consistent with my expectations, routines and procedures.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am better at acknowledging the students that are doing what they are supposed to do.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PBIS implementation has improved my classroom management skills.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of time</td>
<td>More time spent on college readiness.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have more time as a counselor to do the emotional/social/academic work that I would like to be doing.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have more time for students who truly need to be seen by me.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I see fewer students individually because of an increase in paperwork and meetings.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am sought out more for assistance with interventions.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I seem to have my hands in lots of different “pots.”</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am helping with both academic and behavior tiered systems.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I help with discipline less because there are fewer discipline referrals.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There are other interventions, based on need, rather than sending all kids to the school counselor.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of data</td>
<td>PBIS implementation gives me consistent data to refer to and helps track what works and what doesn’t.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am using data to make decisions more consistently.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using discipline data helps me to address student needs more effectively.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am better at analyzing and utilizing data.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual behavioral and academic data provides</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on school counseling program</td>
<td>Framework of PBIS helps us to see how we can improve our school counseling program.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developmental guidance lessons and programming are interconnected with PBIS/RTI efforts.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students are more receptive to initiatives implemented under PBIS rather than those from</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of collaboration</td>
<td>All staff are working together to support academic, social, emotional and behavioral development of students.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PBIS helps to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students and with behavior change.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not every student is sent to the school counselor now.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all students. It is more of a team approach.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I feel that I am working harder to recognize my colleagues and what we are all doing to improve the climate of our school.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using the framework gives us a clear outline of interventions we have at our school.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PBIS has given us a common language to use when we talk about kids’ behaviors.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PBIS has increased communication between staff members.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PBIS has increased communication between staff members and students.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PBIS has increased communication between staff members and parents.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data provides ability to create small counseling groups to address specific behaviors.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data provides direction for individual counseling.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBIS framework helps us to see how we can use data to develop new interventions.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBIS framework helps us to better see the whole student and to identify barriers to learning and success.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I now know how to progress monitor more effectively to see if an intervention is working.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>valuble information as students set goals and actively participate in their career journey.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improving student behavior</strong></td>
<td><strong>Challenges to implementation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBIS give me concrete ways to address student behavior via well defined behavior goals while working to increase frequency of positive behaviors.</td>
<td>I am less effective because implementation of PBIS has put me at odds with teachers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to students’ behaviors.</td>
<td>I find PBIS implementation difficult for me to manage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been able to focus more on positive behaviors rather than on the negatives.</td>
<td>I still feel less effective because I have a high student to counselor ratio. PBIS implementation has not helped me with that concern.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is really nice to be part of a program that recognizes students for positive behaviors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I now realize the importance of celebrations to make students and staff feel good about their accomplishments.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix L**

**Round 2 Dispersion of Responses:**

School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes
After Implementing PBIS

### Round 2 Dispersion of Responses: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes After Implementing PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student attendance has improved.</td>
<td>1 0 2 6 4 2 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tardiness has decreased.</td>
<td>1 1 2 6 3 2 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There are fewer incidents of bullying.</td>
<td>0 0 2 4 6 4 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Individual learning needs are better met.</td>
<td>0 1 1 5 7 2 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Student behavior in hallways has improved.</td>
<td>0 1 0 1 4 5 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Students are more motivated to behave.</td>
<td>0 2 1 1 7 3 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I notice more positive student to teacher/staff interactions.</td>
<td>0 1 0 1 4 9 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. There are more opportunities for students to be mentored.</td>
<td>0 1 0 1 4 9 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Students have a more positive</td>
<td>0 1 0 3 6 6 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
connection to school.

10. Students have a more positive connection to teachers.

11. There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals.

12. There has been a reduction in suspensions.

13. There has been a reduction in failing grades.

14. Students spend more time in class.

Round 2 Dispersion of Responses:

School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in School Climate

After Implementing PBIS
### Round 2 Dispersion of Responses: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in School Climate After Implementing PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.  We have a calmer, more positive overall climate.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.  Students are more prepared to learn.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.  Our school is more welcoming.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.  Our students have more school spirit.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.  Students are more accepting of each other.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.  Students are more respectful of teachers.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.  Staff are on “the same page” about student behavior.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.  Teachers regularly give students specific praise.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.  I notice greater mutual respect amongst teachers.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.  The presence of PBIS has } 0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing Common Core).

25. We experience increased staff collaboration.

26. Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.

Round 2 Dispersion of Responses:

School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Professional Effectiveness After Implementing PBIS
### Round 2 Dispersion of Responses: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Professional Effectiveness After Implementing PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I am better at acknowledging students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. My classroom management skills have improved.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I am more consistent with my expectations of students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I have more time for students who really need to see me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I have more time to support students’ social and emotional growth.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. I have more time to support</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
36. I collect data more regularly.  
37. I am using data more consistently and effectively.
38. I am more aware of which interventions work for my students.
39. I know how to effectively progress monitor for students on my caseload.
40. The PBIS framework helps me to identify barriers to student learning.
41. I am sought after more for assistance with interventions.
42. I am better equipped to design academic interventions.
43. I am better equipped to design behavior interventions.
44. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions.
45. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions.
46. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.
47. I am more proactive instead of reactive when it comes to student behavior.
48. I spend less time on disciplinary concerns.
49. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts.
50. There is a more coordinated effort to address behavior and academic deficits for all students at my school.
51. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges.
52. We now have increased communication between staff members.
53. We now have increased communication between staff members and students.
54. We now have increased communication between staff members and parents.
55. My developmental guidance lessons are interconnected with PBIS efforts.
56. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts.
57. PBIS has helped me to
streamline bullying prevention efforts.

58. Data provides ability to create small counseling groups to address specific types of behaviors.

59. Data provides direction for individual counseling.

### Round 2 Dispersion of Responses: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Challenges to Implementing PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
<th>Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am less effective because implementation has put me at odds with teachers.</td>
<td>7 4 3 2 1 0 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are angry I am asking them to do interventions.</td>
<td>3 3 3 4 3 0 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find PBIS difficult for me to manage.</td>
<td>5 6 2 0 1 3 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
63. I am not more effective because I still have a high student to counselor ratio.

64. There is a lack of staff “buy in.”

65. We lack the resources to fully implement PBIS.

Appendix M

Round Three Dispersion of Responses

School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes

After Implementing PBIS
**Round 3 Dispersion of Responses: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Student Outcomes After Implementing PBIS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (1)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student attendance has improved.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tardiness has decreased.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are fewer incidents of bullying.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual learning needs are better met.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are more motivated to behave.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students have a more positive connection to school.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There has been a reduction in office discipline referrals.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There has been a reduction in suspensions.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There has been a reduction in failing grades.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students spend more time</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Round 3 Dispersion of Responses: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in School Climate After Implementing PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Students are more prepared to learn.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Our students have more school spirit.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Students are more accepting of each other.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Students are more respectful of teachers.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Staff are on “the same page” about student behavior.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Teachers regularly give students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
specific praise.

17. I notice greater mutual respect amongst teachers.

18. The presence of PBIS has mitigated new stressors in our school (such as implementing Common Core).

19. We experience increased staff collaboration.

20. Consistent behavioral expectations district wide has meant less stress for students as they transition building to building.

Round 3 Dispersion of Responses:

School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Professional Effectiveness

After Implementing PBIS
### Round 3 Dispersion of Responses: School Counselors’ Perceptions of Changes in Professional Effectiveness After Implementing PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. PBIS implementation has better defined my role as a school counselor.</td>
<td>1 1 1 6 6 2 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. PBIS framework helps me to see how I can improve my school counseling program.</td>
<td>0 0 4 9 2 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. I am better at acknowledging students.</td>
<td>1 1 2 5 4 3 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. I am better at acknowledging my colleagues.</td>
<td>1 1 2 5 4 3 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. My classroom management skills have improved.</td>
<td>0 1 7 5 2 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I am more consistent with my expectations of students.</td>
<td>1 0 1 7 2 6 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I have more time for students who really need to see me.</td>
<td>2 0 4 6 4 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I have more time to support</td>
<td>0 1 5 4 4 2 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
students’ social and emotional growth.

29. I have more time to support students’ academic growth.

30. I collect data more regularly.

31. I am using data more consistently and effectively.

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38. I am better equipped to assist with academic interventions.

39. I am better equipped to assist with behavior interventions.
40. I am better equipped to collaborate on targeted interventions.

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42. I spend less time on conflict resolution because students have fewer conflicts.

43. PBIS has helped to encourage teachers to help with the emotional needs of students with behavioral challenges.

44. We now have increased communication between staff members.

45. We now have increased communication between staff members and students.

46. We now have increased communication between staff members and parents.

47. My developmental guidance lessons are interconnected with PBIS efforts.

48. My school counseling programs are interconnected with PBIS efforts.

49. PBIS has helped me to streamline bullying prevention efforts.

50. Data provides ability to create
small counseling groups to address specific types of behaviors.

51. Data provides direction for  

individual counseling.

Round 3 Dispersion of Responses:

School Counselors’ Perceptions of Challenges to Implementing PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52. I am less effective because implementation has put me at odds with teachers.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Teachers are angry I am asking them to do interventions.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. I find PBIS difficult for me to manage.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. I am not more effective because I still have a high student to counselor ratio.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. There is a lack of staff “buy in.”</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
57. We lack the resources to fully implement PBIS.