OVERCOMING CHALLENGES: REBOOTING PBIS

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OBJECTIVES

- Participants will be able to identify at least 3 potential barriers to re-starting PBIS.
- Participants will be able to identify at least 3 strategies used to manage barriers to restarting PBIS.
- Participants will be able to identify at least 3 strategies for maintaining effective team functioning.

Charter school within a city:
- 14 public schools (including 3 middle schools)

Students Come from Multiple Districts (8) throughout the MetroWest area

Students Admitted via Lottery

Teacher to Student Ratio: ~10 to 1

THE CHRISTA MCAULIFFE CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

WHO ARE WE?

- McAuliffe is an Expeditionary Learning school for grades six through eight. McAuliffe’s hands-on curriculum inspires high achievement through active learning, character growth, and teamwork. McAuliffe is a diverse community of engaged, motivated learners—scholars and adults alike. At McAuliffe, scholars take ownership of their learning, guided by creative, passionate adults who proactively navigate the balancing act of challenge and support. Our community values independence and individuality, while practicing collaboration, inclusivity, and acceptance.

- The Expeditionary Learning model challenges scholars to think critically and to take active roles in their classrooms and communities, resulting in higher achievement and greater engagement in school.

- For more information on the EL model and how McAuliffe implements it, please visit our websites: www.mcauliffecharter.org and www.ELeducation.org

OUR HISTORY WITH PBIS

- PBIS team existed at McAuliffe 10 years ago
  - Developed behavior matrix for different spaces, there were posters showing the behavior matrix for each location
  - Developed lesson/activity structure for different spaces and group expected behaviors
  - We had data about student behavior and what percentages of our students were Tier 1, 2, or 3
  - Developed recognition system - "Core Value cards"
    - The Core Values are based on EL principles
  - Key staff moved on and we moved buildings
    - Posters weren’t kept track of or reordered when necessary
    - The behavior matrix became outdated as we became 1:1 and student personal devices became more and more advanced
    - Recognition systems persisted, although some were added and the waters were muddied; Staff buy in varied greatly
During the 2017-2018 school year, 7th grade data showed a HIGH frequency of unexpected behaviors. Administration held an after school meeting to strategize with teachers about their concerns.

The decision was made to “go back to basics”; teaching expectations, providing positive reinforcement (via our HOWLs cards), and being consistent with consequences.

Shortly after that, our Wediko consult at the time (Erik Maki) met with the culture team and re-introduced PBIS and helped the team decide that the would be their primary focus.

We did the TFI (Tiered Fidelity Inventory) and collected data from the school—ultimately deciding that we needed a new HOWL: Kindness. We rolled it out at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

Barrier 1: Meeting Time
- Out meetings don’t seem short when we plan them, but they always are! Especially when we were digging into data via the TFI to figure out where we were at as a school and where we needed to go. Meetings passed really fast. We combated this by creating agendas beforehand, designating roles like timekeeper and note taker, breaking into groups to get more done per meeting, and delegating tasks to handle off-hand.

Culture Team: Mission Statement
- Norms
- Agenda Template

Barrier 2: Staff Push Back
- Yearly turnover at McAuliffe has created a staff of both veterans and brand new people. This meant that initiatives we would launch (such as rebooting HOWL cards and using them for class incentives) were met with a wide spectrum of buy in. We held PDs, had grade level Culture Team reps check in with individuals, and basically just consistently reinforced the messaging we wanted staff to get on board with.

Barrier 3: New Behavior Matrix Expectations
- New expectations arose as we revamped our Behavior Matrix, mostly re: new technology and some outdated dress code expectations. However, there were also expectations that we reviewed where the team was split between “picking the battle” or not, i.e. hoods and hats in class.

Implementation now includes:
- Getting data from students at least once a year about how well they understand expectations and how often they are receiving HOWLs cards
- Reviewing HOWLs card data in general via our HOWLs spreadsheets
- Reviewing behavioral data during Culture Team meetings to identify areas of focus
- Leading PBIS centered PD for staff about these areas of focus and PBIS in general to increase both capacity and buy-in
- Posting the behavioral matrix all over the building to identify desired behaviors in different locations, and teaching these behaviors in class and in crew
- Observing and praising desired behaviors being done in order to reinforce them with HOWLs cards and connected contests and raffles.
This is one of our primary, day-to-day interventions.

Given to students who are exhibiting behaviors that we want to reinforce, i.e:

- Starting the do now right away
- Filling out their note catcher clearly and quietly
- Using discussion language to make a peer feel included

These small reinforcements throughout the day shape the behavior we want to see in our classrooms and in the building.

Scholars like receiving them, even if they don’t act like it.

There are HOWL cards in every classroom in a visible spot so that any teacher in there can grab one and give them out. Need more? They’re in the staff lounge!

In response to a barrier identified by staff, the team also creates pre-written cards for people to copy and hand out as needed.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT HOWLS CARDS?
Why shouldn’t we stick to zero tolerance policies to maintain safety?

PBIS can feel prison treats them like dogs.

Learning and being good should be intrinsically motivating. The use of rewards makes kids materialistic and

Recognize staff!

PBIS is associated with safer positive school cultures.

PBIS benefits teachers too!! Higher perceptions of self efficacy; lower burnout; more positive interactions with students

Provide education on what PBIS is and isn’t

ADDRESS BARRIERS: BUILD BUY-IN

ADDRESS BARRIERS: ADDRESS PUSHBACK

MANAGING BARRIERS: ADDRESS PUSHBACK

MANAGING BARRIERS: ADDRESS PUSHBACK

INVEST IN EFFECTIVE TEAM FUNCTIONING: FORMAT & TOOLS

INVEST IN EFFECTIVE TEAM FUNCTIONING CONT’D: INVEST IN PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING PROCESSES.
REFERENCES