

Positive Behavior Support Implementation

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An Action Research Proposal/Report Presented to
The Graduate Program in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Masters in Education/Continuing Teaching License

Concordia University Portland

2010

Abstract

The purpose of this action research was to investigate how Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) could be implemented as well as what the advantages and disadvantages, including rewards, of the program were. The researcher collected data through staff and student surveys, PBS team meetings, and behavior tracking. The research was done at the researcher's small junior/senior high school. Results showed the implementation of PBS helped to change the atmosphere of this small school. Advantages and disadvantages of the program are also discussed throughout the paper.



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Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction 4

Chapter 2 – The Issue 7

Chapter 3 – Outcomes and Evaluation 10

Chapter 4 – Action Plan 12

Chapter 5 – Results and Next Steps 20

References 37



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Action Research Proposal

Chapter 1 - Introduction

At the base of Crater Lake a small struggling community barely survives. This community used to be vibrant before the logging industries went dry in the early 1980's. The town sitting between two beautiful rivers that merge together has a population of about 712, not including the outlying areas. This once vibrant town is slowly losing hope. There is a diverse population of people making up this community: American Indian (55.9%), White Non-Hispanic (41.2%), Hispanic (5.3%), two or more races (4.5%), and other race (1.3%) (City of ____, 2008). Many people struggle to get by, many times having only one household member working. The average income for a family is about \$29,180. Most people have to commute to work each day into a larger community with a population of about 20,000 (City of ____, 2008). This is a one way commute of approximately 30 minutes.

Only about four percent of the residents in this community have a bachelor's degree or higher (City of ____, 2008). This makes stressing the importance of school, especially school, a nearly impossible task. The small beautiful town is slowly losing its beauty. The people of this town are losing sight of the towns' natural beauty and beginning to forget what this small community used to be like.

There are two public schools in this community; one elementary and one middle/high school. The elementary is a K-6 school with a school population of 235. The middle/high school is 7-12 with a school population of approximately 210 students. Both schools are

funded having qualified with about 85% free and reduced lunch count. The two schools are part of a very spread out district consisting of: one High School, four Middle/High Schools, two Middle Schools, 14 Elementary Schools, one Charter Elementary School and one Alternative School (___ School District, 2009). The distance between most of these schools is close to about 45 minutes one way.

The researcher will be looking into the small community's middle/high school for this research project. At this school, there are currently 11 full time teachers, four part-time teachers, two administrators and six paraprofessionals. The turnover rate for teachers is very high. The average employment for a teacher at this school is three years. However, there are a few teachers that have been working at this school for 10 years or longer. It seems that teachers either never leave or leave as soon as they get the chance. The students know this, so each time a new teacher comes in they are quick to judge, not trusting or getting attached to them knowing they will mostly likely be gone before they graduate. Students therefore struggle with consistency. Since there is a lack of consistency as well as support and safety at home, going to school is the only place where students have a chance at receiving the support and guidance needed. Due to the lack of support and guidance this small school is faced with several behavioral and discipline problems.

The researcher grew up in this small community gaining insight throughout her schooling experience. After graduating from college the researcher came back to teach at this small middle/high school and for the past two years has been the high school math teacher. Over the past two years the researcher has participated in various committees and

community groups trying to help improve the community and school environment. She plans to continue teaching at this small school to help make a positive impact within the school and community.

The researcher will be looking into how the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) program can help provide much needed consistency for the students at this small school, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of incorporating rewards (intrinsic verses extrinsic) into the program. To conclude, the research question is: “How can PBS be implemented at CHS and what are the advantages and disadvantages, including rewards, of the program?”



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Chapter two – The Issue

There are several situations that need to be improved at this small school. Some situations this small school struggles with include: the large amount of student referrals and behavioral problems teachers and administrators are dealing with on a daily basis, the lack of consistency at home and school the students face daily, the lack of positive reinforcements and influences the students come in contact with, and the lack of pride in oneself, community, and school.

It is very clear these issues exist with the students attending this small school. When walking into the school or driving through the community it becomes very clear the lack of pride in one's school and community. The streets and buildings look vacant as if it is a ghost town. There is garbage scattered along the side of streets and in vacant lots. The school is run down not offering much excitement or beauty to the community. The lack of community pride seems to be passed down to the students' individual pride in oneself. When taking a closer look at the students' efforts in school through their grades and classroom behavior it also becomes clear the lack of pride in oneself. The lack of effort could also be due to the students lack of organization, study habits and actual ability level as well.

The office is always full of students being disciplined rather than full of students being recognized for their outstanding behaviors. Thus far this year there has been 957 office referrals given. The teachers and administrators have struggled this year with what to do

with their students. They are finding that the majority of their time is spent disciplining students instead of teaching. Most of the students go from classroom to classroom, not really knowing what to expect. There are many times students come into the researchers classroom asking: What do we need? What should we be doing? What are we doing in class today? Will the expectations be the same or different? This is a huge problem for some of our students who are really yearning for some sort of consistency in their daily routine. When students go from one class to another with similar expectations the students have less behavioral problems and demonstrate a higher performance level. Many students have stated why can't we just have the same rules throughout?

The two main groups that are affected by these issues are the students and the staff members who work with these students daily. Many students don't like coming to school anymore because all it is for them is a place to get picked on or listen to other students be disrespectful. To them there is very little learning happening. Some students also feel they are being punished in their classes because of the few students who are misbehaving. For example, in science class there are very little labs that have occurred due to the fact that most of the class period the teacher is correcting behavior and has little time to cover the content leaving no time for the fun part, the labs. Passing time for the students is just miserable. The halls are very chaotic; students bumping into one another, using profanity and behaving disrespectfully. This is one example of misbehavior that makes some students hate coming to school, resulting in poor overall attendance.

The teachers and staff members have really struggled with how to find a happy medium where learning can take place while disciplining the few that need it. Not letting a few students ruin the learning experiences of many. The teachers at this small school also struggle staying positive and trying to reinforce students for their good behaviors. They instead are very quick to point out the misbehaviors and punish students instead of trying to redirect them. Both groups want to see change come about in a positive matter, but have really struggled with making that positive change happen. The staff members are resistant, not wanting to be asked to do any more work because they already feel overloaded as it is. The students are resistant not wanting more rules that they will be punished for if not followed. Once PBS is fully implemented it could affect the whole population staff, students and parents in a positive way. The students at this small school are not bad children they are just children in need of guidance. Trying to find the right guidance or plan for these students is the goal for the researcher.

Literature Review

There are several journals and professional articles that currently discuss various school wide behavior intervention plans. One of these plans is Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). Many of the articles and journals discuss ways of implementing and success stories of various school wide implementations. However, there are only a few articles/journals that discuss the struggles or disadvantages of PBS. Many of the success stories took place in low income schools, similar to the small school research site.

Rewards is a key component of implementing PBS successfully at a school; all students must be given rewards not just the targeted students (Sailor, 2007). PBS takes a proactive

approach to behavior, trying to increase positive reinforcement more than negative punishments (Sailor).

PBS Implementation

There are currently about 7,000 schools nationwide implementing a PBS program (Cregor, 2008). There are several key components when implementing PBS into a school, including that PBS should be fully integrated within the school culture and climate (Sailor, 2007). Further, all articles/journals stated there must be consistency for all students when it comes to school wide expectations. A PBS team must be established with strong, well respected teachers. This team needs to help establish instructional and behavioral supports for all teachers and students (Sugai, 2008). Teachers must try to use common language when discussing with students their actions and behaviors as well as set clear and consistent consequence for all students (Cregor, 2008). Teachers must also come up with clear outcome goals they are hoping to achieve through implementation, helping give meaning to the implementation (Simonsen, 2008).

Once there is a PBS team established before the start of the school year the team must meet and come up with a clear set of expectations that the staff has created. These expectations should be posted throughout the school common areas as well as in every classroom. The first week of school should not only be spent on teaching these expectations to all students but also give the students time to practice the expectations, allowing for teachers to reinforce students for following the school wide expectations (Lane, 2007). All these lessons should be created by the PBS team, eliminating stress and

work for the teachers. The team should ask very little of the teachers trying to help increase teacher buy-in. For a school to have a successful PBS implementation that will last over the long haul there must be 80% buy-in from teachers (Cregor, 2008). The PBS team should not only teach management skills and expectations to teachers but to families as well (Safran, 2006).

A large component of PBS is data. All decisions made by the PBS team are data driven (Arter, 2007). Teachers or the PBS team need to consistently review data determining where to focus their energy (Cregor, 2008). After looking at data and the target students the team will then address why the person engages in problem behaviors rather than looking and focusing solely on the problem (Sailor, 2007). Once the students have been identified as yellow or red zone students (targeted students) the team must provide these students with individualized interventions that teach positive appropriate behaviors, helping to reinforce the school wide expectations (Killu, 2006).

PBS does not solely focus on the behavioral aspects of a school. It also increases the students' academic learning levels. Social and behavioral goals need to coexist with academic goals (Sailor, 2007). Teachers must also make strong connections with their students. A good way to do this is to set up a mentoring program with the school day (Arter, 2007). By setting up these strong connections it allows for the students to feel they have at least one teacher on their side, giving them someone they can always go to for support.

Advantages of PBS

There are several advantages to implementing PBS or another type of positive behavioral program. The advantages are not solely based on students' behavioral improvements but also academic improvements and increase in attendance rates. The schools that have implemented PBS have reported a reduction of office referral by about 50%, improving the overall atmosphere of the school (Cregor, 2008). Studies have shown that nearly half of classroom time is spent on discipline problems (Arter, 2007). Reducing any amount of this time taken away from classroom instruction will help increase students academic performances. Due to the lower amount of office referrals and discipline problems there is an increase of classroom instruction time (Sailor, 2007). Students are more motivated to come to school when academic failure is not a concern. By having more classroom instruction time, this helps the struggling students become more successful in their schooling as well as increases school attendance (Arter, 2007).

PBS benefits all students regardless of language, disability, or cultural norms. This is very important, especially in diverse schools such as the research site (Sailor, 2007). Schools who have implemented PBS report an improvement in their special education students' behaviors. PBS helps to bring consistency and sets up support systems for students, something that is much need for special education students (Sugai, 2008).

When PBS is first implemented into a school, about 80% of all students will respond to the first level of intervention (Lane, 2007). These students are the ones that will help bring the other students on board as long as teachers remember to continue reinforcing

them for following the expectations. PBS increases the number of positive interactions between students and teachers helping students to develop a caring relationship with their teachers. Studies show when students have a caring relationship with their teachers they are more likely to meet behavior and academic expectations (Arter, 2007).

Disadvantages/Struggles of PBS

There are some struggles or disadvantages to implementing a behavioral support program such as PBS. A huge struggle is going to be time. The PBS team will need to put in several hours outside of school setting up systems. Teacher buy-in is another struggle schools have faced. For a school to have a successful PBS implementation there must be 80% buy-in (Cregor, 2008). Most all behavioral programs are not immediate fixes like many teachers and administrators wish for. This program takes approximately two to three years to be fully implemented and for teachers to begin seeing consistent changes in behaviors (Sailor, 2007). Many times it takes extensive time to replace one behavior with another. Students with chronic behavior may be resistant to change so the team must have several strategies to implement (Arter, 2007). Don't just rely on a one size fits all strategy.

Implementing a program like PBS requires time away from students (something that is very hard for all teachers and students to adjust to). There are several professional development seminars that the PBS team should try to attend (Sailor, 2007). A lack of understanding of criteria and insufficient knowledge of the procedures can lead to poorly implemented interventions. This demonstrates the importance of the PBS team being very

knowledge about the behavioral program before implementation (Killu, 2006). Not only is it very important the PBS team be highly trained, but also for them to train all the staff so there is consistency throughout the school. This will take time and most likely money to pay teachers for their extra time. Problem behaviors are more likely to occur when staff members lack training and are not all being consistent with enforcing the expectations (Killu, 2006).

PBS has been widely studied in elementary school settings; however, little studies have been done in high school settings which may be a disadvantage for a small school such as the research site. Due to the lack of research, it is unknown how high school students respond to the various interventions (Lane, 2007). PBS is data driven so there is a heavy reliance on office referral data which does not always demonstrate the overall atmosphere of a school (Lane, 2007). If only looking at the data, individual student support may be given unevenly causing various students to be overlooked (Safran, 2006).

Rewards

Reward systems are a key component to any successful behavioral support program. An important part of rewards is to keep the various rewards fresh, that is, don't allow students to get burnt out or bored with the rewards. Teachers need to make sure they are rewarding students randomly for appropriate behaviors (Cregor, 2008). Students should not know when rewards are coming. Positive social interactions and unexpected rewards may not work initially, but produce better long-term behavior outcomes (Williams, 2004). Rewards must be given to all students who are demonstrating the appropriate

behaviors or following school wide expectations, not simply the targeted students or intensive behavior students (Sailor, 2007).

Teams need to be aware of all students when setting up rewards systems. There may be some students who do not turn in their tickets for rewards. The team then needs to figure out why these students are not responsive to the rewards. It may be these students don't need or want a reward or there may be something else to it (Lane, 2007). Cook says that "Motivation must first be external before it can be internal. No child is born wanting to play an instrument" (2003, p. 41). This statement might explain why some students do not feel the need to turn in their tickets. It also explains that simply handing out rewards or tickets for rewards will not fix behaviors; it's just the beginning step.

Rewards or motivators do not always have to cost money which is something that too many people assume. Some examples of external motivators could include: visible rewards, opportunities to perform for praise or evaluation, food, contest, fun time and self-esteem boosters. These external motivators are great; however, external extrinsic motivators should be used wisely and in moderation. The ultimate goal is for each student to develop an intrinsic reward system. By allowing students to learn to develop an intrinsic reward system they are also developing pride in accomplishments for themselves (Cook, 2003). Another great aspect of intrinsic motivation is that it does not rely on the teacher to be present, constantly encouraging behaviors which is many times very hard for a teacher to get to every student every time they do something great (Williams, 2004).

Summary

After reading various articles and journals the researcher sees the importance of implementing some sort of behavioral support system within their school, whether it be PBS or a similar system. The key components that must be within the support system are consistency of expectations and consequences, teachers and administrators willing to put extra time into creating a strong system, teachers with an open mind about trying various programs and having a rewards system in place. Implementing a behavioral program takes time and is not something that is going to have great results instantly. If the teachers at this small school will decide to invest some time and energy into implementing a behavioral program not only will the students benefit but the teachers will as well.



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Action Research Proposal

Chapter Three – Outcomes and Evaluation

This research project seeks to find how PBS can be implemented at CHS and what are the advantages and disadvantages, including rewards, of the program.

It has become evident through experience and literature that it is crucial to have some sort of behavior support system in place at schools to allow for students to truly succeed.

However, there are several schools that are lacking a behavioral support system or have not put the time and efforts needed to fully implement a behavior support system.

The research has shown that by having a behavior support system, whether it is PBS or something similar, as long as it is positively reinforcing the students, there will be an increase in students' academic performance, an increase in attendance rates, as well as decreases in office referrals. Once teachers set expectations, are consistent with consequences, and agree to positively reinforce the good behaviors teachers will begin to see changes in the students' behaviors. The classrooms will be full of students learning instead of the office being filled with students awaiting their consequences. Teachers will be able to spend the majority of their classroom time teaching verses dealing with behavior problems. Teachers will have more time to make meaningful lessons addressing more of the needs of their students giving them the best education possible.

The researcher will know that the issue has begun to be solved when there is a 15% decrease in office referrals. Another way will be through various surveys the teachers fill out and discussions with administrators and staff. Lastly, observation will be done in the hallways and classrooms observing teacher interactions with students as well as students' interactions with one another. Data sheets will be collected from all teachers daily to track the interactions with teachers and students. Data will also be tracked from office discipline referrals. Student attendance rates should also begin to increase once students and teachers make positive relationships with one another. Academic performances will also increase due to the increase in students' attendance, the students' connections with teachers and the increased amount of classroom instruction.

At the end of this research project there should be some evidence of what is working and what needs to be adjusted to make the behavior support system work for this small school. There should also be good data that shows which rewards are working and which rewards need to be adjusted.



Action Plan Proposal

Chapter Four – Action Plan

In this research project the researcher asks; “How can PBS be implemented at CHS and what are the advantages and disadvantages, including rewards, of the program?”

The Issue

At the research site teachers, students and parents are struggling with the lack of consistency when it comes to dealing with behavioral problems. Office discipline referrals have been continually going up especially as the year is coming to an end. Teachers are spending more and more time dealing with problem behaviors instead of teaching their content and curriculum. Studies have shown that nearly half of classroom time is spent on discipline problems (Arter, 2007). Taking away from students learning is one factor that could be attributing to our students lower academic levels. Teachers are also struggling with how they should reward students. Should they be giving students something every time they do something right or is there a better way? Students have voiced concerns about lack of consistency within classrooms facing different expectations throughout the school. Parents have put their trust in this small school to give their children the best education possible; however, they are beginning to lose confidence. Many parents and community members are hearing negatives about the school instead of positives.

Solutions

The researcher has investigated three behavioral programs. The first program called judicious discipline. Judicious discipline focuses mostly on character education. Many students these days are lacking much needed basic social skills which is what this program tries to encourage. Within this program classrooms take a democratic approach to classroom management, encouraging character building within the curriculum (Gathercoal, 2000). By setting classrooms up like this encourages students to feel respected and acknowledges them as actual citizens. One key to this program is that it is based off of the U.S. Bill of Rights (Gathercoal, 2000). There are rewards systems and punishments put in place with this program. The rewards are mostly intrinsic rewards encouraging students to learn self gratitude (Gathercoal, 2000). This program will work well for some schools, however, at the research site this particular program would not work well. Teachers at this school are going to have a hard time all agreeing to implement any program especially if the program relies mostly on teachers following through in their individual classroom. This is why the researchers has rejected this specific program.

Assertive discipline is another behavioral program that some schools implement. This program is based on the teacher being the authority figure in the classroom. The teacher must always be in control setting all the rules and expectations not asking or seeking students input (Allen, 1996). Expectations must be stated at the beginning of the year allowing for all students to learn what is expected of them. Allen states that “The assertive teacher is more effective than the nonassertive or the hostile teacher.” This

positive and supporting climate is done through a careful application of assertive discipline (Allen, 1996). For this program to be successful teachers must apply positive consequence for students when expectations are met and negative consequences with expectations are not met. Once again the main thing to keep in mind is when implementing this program is teachers must be assertive rather than passive or hostile (Allen, 1996). The researcher has also chosen to reject this program because it doesn't seem to be the best fit for this research site. Many times teachers have a hard time being assertive in all circumstances which for this program to work teachers must be assertive at all times. The students at this research also do not seem to respond well to demands and assertive behaviors.

The last program that the researcher has looked into is called Positive Behavioral Supports. This behavioral program seems to be the best fit for the research site. The program seems to incorporate components for both of the other two programs mainly trying to always focus on the positives. PBS seems to be a better fit for the teachers at this research site. Several schools throughout the nation have been faced with behavioral issues similar to this small school's issues. Many schools, approximately 7,000 have chosen to implement this program (Cregor, 2008).

PBS is not the only behavioral support program being implemented nationwide; however, most of the behavioral programs follow similar guidelines for success. Within all the various behavioral programs consistency of expectations is key (Lane, 2007). Students, teachers and parents must all be aware of the school wide expectations and when it comes

to consequences, there should never be any surprises. At this research site, the behavioral program implemented must target a diverse group of students. The research on PBS states that it benefits all students regardless of their language, ability, or cultural norms (Sailor, 2007). Within all behavioral support programs, there are various rewards systems that are set up. Rewards systems vary between schools and students there is not a one size fits all when it comes to rewards. Rewards must always be changing keeping it exciting for students (Cregor, 2008). The most important component of a successful rewards system is that the rewards target all students and are given out randomly (Williams, 2004).

Steps Toward Solutions

The first step that must be taken towards improving this small schools atmosphere is to create a strong behavioral team. The research states that before implementing any program there must be a strong team of teachers supporting the program and sharing a common goal (Sugai, 2008). Teachers must be willing to put in the extra time knowing that the payoff will come later through the improvement in their students' behaviors. This team must also be highly respected by all staff because for any program to have a successful implementation there must be 80% buy-in from all staff (Cregor, 2008).

Before presenting the program to the staff, the team must have a strong outline of what the program is going to look like, allowing for suggestions/input from all staff members.

After presenting the finalized plan, the team needs to take time to listen to concerns and feedback once again. This should all take place before students return from summer vacation. After the staff concerns have been addressed, the team must then lead the

teachers in a discussion on expectations. All teachers must come up with and agree to the same school wide expectations. After these expectations have been agreed upon, the team needs to make posters, hanging them throughout the school so that the students are constantly reminded.

The team then needs to have a constant way of taking and analyzing data. A strong behavioral program bases decision making on data taken by their teachers (Cregor, 2008). This form needs to be handed out to all teachers. The team must compile data weekly; looking to see where there energy should be focused. The team also must come up with a rewards system which all teachers agree to participate in. The rewards will change throughout the year; however, the system itself should stay the same unless adjustments are needed.

Once the team and teachers are trained, ready and excited about this implementation; they are ready for students and school to start. The first week of school, the teachers will spend a large amount of time not only teaching the school wide expectations, but also practicing the expectations (Lane, 2007). The lessons for teaching and practicing these expectations should be created by the behavioral team. The team should ask very little from the teachers trying to help keep that much needed 80% buy-in from the teachers (Cregor, 2008).

Throughout the year, the team must meet monthly in order to reevaluate the program making sure teachers and students are still responding positively. A suggestions box

should be set up for the teachers and students to continually provide feedback access in order to help the team improve on any weaknesses the program might have.

Action Plan Timeline

May & June (2009)

- The research site must form a PBS/behavioral team composed of well respected teachers.
- Teachers at the research site need to be informed that a new behavior program is going to be implemented next school year.

August & September

- The PBS team must meet several times to write-up an outline for the year describing for the rest of the teachers what the program will look like throughout the year.
- Before school start present the outline of the program to the staff allowing for suggestions as well as create data sheets to be handed out to all teachers.
- Take feedback/suggestions and improve the overall outline for the year of the program.
- At the in-service meeting before school starts the PBS team will lead teachers through an exercise developing the school wide expectations. During this meeting teachers will also be given the data sheets that they will be expected to do daily. The last thing to be discussed at this meeting is the rewards systems.
- Once expectations have been decided on the team needs to have posters made and hang them throughout the school.
- First week of school teachers will teach the new school wide expectations. The lessons will include going over the new expectations as well as practicing what these expectations look like.
- During this first week the rewards system must also be introduced to the students.

- Teachers must begin handing out “paw points” (our rewards tickets).

October - December

- Data must be compiled and analyzed to see where the problem behaviors are occurring. Once that is determined lesson can be created to help improve behaviors.
- Teachers continue handing out “paw points” (our rewards tickets).
- The team must meet two times a month to evaluate the programs progress.

January

- Data must be compiled and analyzed to see where the problem behaviors are occurring. Once that is determined lesson can be created to help improve behaviors.
- Teachers continue handing out “paw points” (our rewards tickets).
- The team must meet two times a month to evaluate the programs progress.
- During the meetings this month the team needs to plan for the semester assembly. During this assembly students will be given back all their paw points and then be able to put them in various boxes to win an assortment of prizes.

February – May

- Data must be compiled and analyzed to see where the problem behaviors are occurring. Once that is determined lesson can be created to help improve behaviors.
- Teachers continue handing out “paw points” (our rewards tickets).
- The team must meet two times a month to evaluate the programs progress.

June

- Data must be compiled and analyzed to see where the problem behaviors are occurring. Once that is determined lesson can be created to help improve behaviors.
- Teachers continue handing out “paw points” (our rewards tickets).

- The team must meet two times a month to evaluate the programs progress.
- During the meetings this month the team needs to plan for the semester assembly. During this assembly students will be given back all their paw points and then be able to put them in various boxes to win an assortment of prizes.
- The teachers will been given a survey at the end of the year asking for various ways to improve the program for next year. The survey will be analyzed by the team once school is out.

If all teachers are willing to try this program and work towards a successful implementation, there should be a huge improvement within students' behavior and the school environment. Teachers will find they have more time to teach their curriculum. Administrators will have more time to positively interact with students, due to the decrease in office discipline referrals. Students will find they enjoy coming to school more.



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Action Research Proposal

Chapter Five – Results and Next Steps

The purpose of this research project was to attempt to answer the question: “How can PBS be implemented at CHS and what are the advantages and disadvantages, including rewards, of the program?” Over the past years, discipline programs have come and gone at this small school leaving no consistency with the staff and students. Introducing yet another new program to the staff and students could prove to be just the push this school needs or it may just be another program that will fade away. The staff has been struggling to find a program with strategies to help encourage positive student behavior and increase student attendance and participation in school. Many staff members have had several discussions on how to reach out to these students; however, not one person has come up with a solution. Introducing the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) to this school is something the researcher feels could be just the solution.

There have been a few changes to this school since the previous school year. Due to budget cuts, the school has reduced their staff members. Last year there were 11 full-time teachers, four part-time teachers, two administrators and six paraprofessionals. This year there are 10 full-time teachers, two part-time teachers, two administrators and five paraprofessionals. The decline of staff has forced some teachers to teach out of their content area as well as increased class sizes. Most teachers teach five different classes, some even teach six, increasing the work load and apparent stress level of most teachers at this small school. The decline in staff members may have affected the students in many

ways. Increasingly, teachers do not have the time to provide one on one instruction and support to students. This results in students not receiving as much attention as previously.

The increased work load has also made teachers less likely to want to be involved in various committees such as the PBS team. The decline in participation on the team has made it a challenge to continue providing fun and rewarding activities for the students as well as tracking data. Teacher buy-in also has seemed to decline, perhaps due to the increased stress level. The researcher believes some teachers feel that PBS may just add to their work load instead of looking at PBS as a strategy to help improve students' behaviors, in turn reducing work loads.

In order for PBS to be successful at CHS there were several processes done throughout the year. Surveys were given to the teachers and students. The surveys were given at the beginning of the year, at semester break (middle of year), and at the end of the school year. For this research the teachers' survey will be the main survey used. The teachers' input was the most relevant and reliable. Behavior tracking was done throughout the year which tracked both positive as well as negative behavior. PBS meetings were held twice a month to address any concerns as well as plan reward days and events. Lessons were created to help address various problem behaviors. Lastly, the researcher discussed with several teachers and the administrator their feelings on the implementation of PBS.

PBS Team Meetings

Before the school year started the PBS team met several times, planning the first few days of school. During these meetings prior to the start of school it was also discussed how PBS would be introduced to the staff as well as the students. The team decided to allow teachers to help write the school-wide expectations hoping to increase teacher buy-in. The team also established the rewards system (Paw Points) that would be used throughout the year. Lastly, the team discussed how students' negative behaviors would be tracked.

The PBS team met every other week throughout the school year looking at data to determine if various lessons needed to be taught to reinforce certain expectations. If it was decided a lesson needed to be taught, a few members of the team would meet, write up a reinforcement lesson of the expectation and then hand it out to the prep team teachers. The teachers then would teach the lesson in the following days, or the lesson would be presented during a morning assembly. If the problem behavior continued the team would plan a reward activity for students who were meeting the expectation such as ice-cream or an afternoon movie to encourage all students to strive to meet the expectation. During these meetings the team also reviewed input from various teachers, always working towards improving the implementation of PBS.

Staff Surveys

The team made the decision to give the same survey to the teachers all three times keeping consistency throughout the year. This survey was handed out to the teachers at a

staff meeting the first month of school, then again in January and finally during the last week of school. The surveys were confidential and all teachers were encouraged to answer truthfully. The survey consisted of 14 questions. The first seven gave teachers the Likert option of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The last seven were short answer questions. For the purpose of this paper the researcher will focus on the first seven questions and responses. In all of the surveys handed out there was a fairly good participation rate.

PBS Staff Opinion Survey – September 2009

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. We as a staff give sufficient rewards to students for positive behavior.	0%	25%	63%	12%
2. Information pertaining to PBS is presented clearly and in a timely manner.	0%	0%	94%	6%
3. The PBS “Back to School” teaching and re-teaching of expectations was effective.	6%	12%	69%	13%
4. Implementation of the PBS “School-wide expectations” has been effective.	6%	13%	81%	0%
5. The implementation of PBS has created positive behavior changes among students.	6%	6%	75%	13%
6. The implementation of PBS has increased student academic achievement this year.	0%	18%	69%	13%
7. There is improvement in student behavior in the common areas of the school this year.	0%	12%	75%	13%

This survey had 100% of the teachers participate (PBS Surveys, 2009).

This first survey showed that the teachers were excited and ready to implement PBS; not only through their willingness to participate but also through their responses. The responses given in this survey made it clear that the PBS team was on the right track, but

needed to focus efforts on positively rewarding students as well as reinforcing school-wide expectations.

PBS Staff Opinion Survey – January 2010

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. We as a staff give sufficient rewards to students for positive behavior.	5%	16%	68%	11%
2. Information pertaining to PBS is presented clearly and in a timely manner.	0%	5%	63%	32%
3. The PBS “Back from winter break” teaching and re-teaching of expectations was effective.	47%	37%	16%	0%
4. Implementation of the PBS “School-wide expectations” has been effective.	0%	10%	74%	16%
5. The implementation of PBS has created positive behavior changes among students.	0%	10%	74%	16%
6. The implementation of PBS has increased student academic achievement this year.	0%	5%	84%	11%
7. There is improvement in student behavior in the common areas of the school this year.	0%	6%	89%	5%

This survey had 95% participation (PBS Surveys, 2009).

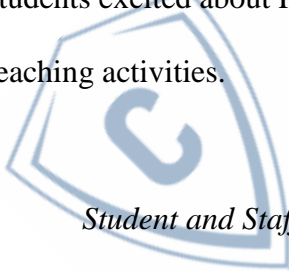
The middle of the year survey made it very clear that the “back from winter break” reinforcement activities were not successful. According to feedback from the teachers, the activities were too repetitive and boring. Students felt like they were being treated like elementary students. The teachers also commented that the students were starting to get burnt out on PBS. During the beginning of the year rewards were new and exciting; however, the assemblies and rewards were starting to become repetitive and boring. This survey also showed there was a slight improvement of staff positively rewarding students. The staff still needed to continue working on increased positive interactions however they were on the right track.

PBS Staff Opinion Survey – June 2010

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. We as a staff give sufficient rewards to students for positive behavior.	12%	6%	71%	11%
2. Information pertaining to PBS is presented clearly and in a timely manner.	0%	18%	82%	0%
3. The PBS “Back to School and Back from winter break” teaching and re-teaching of expectations was effective.	17%	59%	24%	0%
4. Implementation of the PBS “School-wide expectations” has been effective.	0%	6%	76%	18%
5. The implementation of PBS has created positive behavior changes among students.	0%	0%	82%	18%
6. The implementation of PBS has increased student academic achievement this year.	0%	6%	82%	12%
7. There is improvement in student behavior in the common areas of the school this year.	0%	6%	88%	6%

This survey had 89% participation (PBS Surveys, 2009).

The end of the year survey showed the PBS team made large improvements in certain areas such as students’ behaviors; however, in order to continue to keep the teachers and students excited about PBS the team must improve the rewards system and the re-teaching activities.



Student and Staff Survey

During the middle of the year, in December, another survey was given to the students and staff. This survey was to determine if the students and the staff were on the same page when it came to understanding what PBS looked like at this small school. The results were very interesting and gave the PBS team and staff several items to consider.

Staff Survey December 2009

Questions	Yes	No
1. A small number of positively and clearly stated student expectations at our school have been defined.	100%	0%
2. The expectations are taught directly to the students.	94%	6%
3. Consequences for problem behaviors are defined clearly.	81%	19%
4. Expected student behaviors are rewarded regularly.	88%	12%
5. Students have been taught expectations for appropriate behavior in common areas.	100%	0%
6. I am supportive of students.	100%	0%
7. Students believe that the work they do at school is important.	50%	50%
8. Students are proud to be part of the school.	62%	38%

(PBS Surveys, 2009).

Student Survey December 2009

Questions	Yes	No
1. A small number of positively and clearly stated student expectations at our school have been defined.	87%	13%
2. The expectations are taught directly by staff at our school.	83%	17%
3. Consequences for problem behaviors are defined clearly by staff at our school.	72%	28%
4. Expected student behaviors are rewarded regularly by staff at our school.	59%	41%
5. I have been taught expectations for appropriate behavior in common areas.	80%	20%
6. Staff members are supportive of me.	70%	30%
7. I believe that the work they do at school is important.	71%	29%
8. I am proud to be part of the school.	68%	32%

(PBS Surveys, 2009).

This survey had some very eye opening results, not only for the PBS team but the staff as a whole. The first two questions were answered fairly similar by both students and staff, informing the team that the teaching of expectation had been done thoroughly and consistently. The third and fourth questions were a little concerning due to the difference

of opinion from students and staff. In question three only 72% of students felt that consequences were clearly defined when 81% of staff stated they believe consequences were clearly defined. The team decided the teachers needed to do a better job of informing students of consequences. Various lessons were written by the PBS team then distributed to teachers to teach during their prep team classes.

The fourth question made it very clear the staff needed some more training on the importance of reinforcement of expected behavior. In this question, 59% of students felt expected behavior was being rewarded regularly when 88% of the staff felt they were rewarding expected behavior regularly. This was done during a few teachers meetings. First, teachers were asked to brainstorm all the reasons they reward students and ways to help them remember to reward students. After the brainstorming activity staff members shared ideas with one another. This topic was brought up throughout the rest of the year during staff meetings.

The last three questions are about students feeling proud of themselves as well as encouraging them to take pride in their school. This is an area that needs improvement as shown through the surveys. Question six asked if staff members were supportive of the students; 70% of the students said yes where as 100% of the staff felt they were supportive of the students. In question seven students were asked if they believe the work they do is important 71% said yes where as only 51% of the staff felt the students believe the work they are doing is important. The last question asked if the students were proud to be a part of this school; 68% of the students said yes, where as 62% of the staff

believed the students were proud of their school. Staff and students are lacking the much needed pride and determination to better ones self.

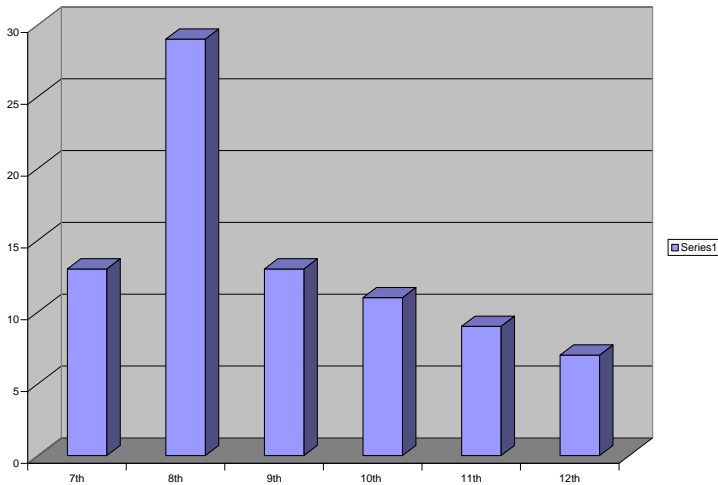
Summary Teacher and Student Surveys

The first three surveys were to gain information from the staff on their thoughts and feelings toward PBS. These three surveys also allowed for the PBS team to identify aspects of the program that need improvement such as the rewards system and the re-teaching of expectations after breaks. The last survey, which was given to both the students and teachers, gave the team an insight into how the students and staff felt about the school in general. The key points of this survey were teachers need to work on informing students of consequences for their actions as well as encouraging students to feel pride in their school.

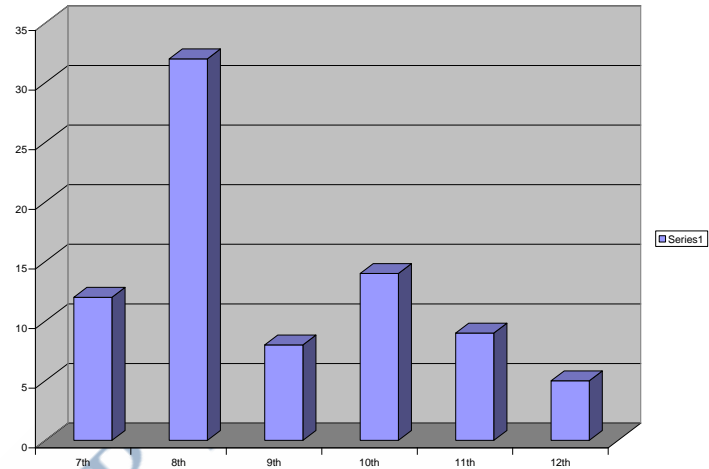
Behavior Tracking

At this small school, teachers track students' negative behaviors on "behavior trackers" not "referrals," throughout the year. In order for a student to receive an office discipline referral a teacher must have three minor offenses marked on the "behavior tracker" within a six week period. In some cases such as skipping class, fighting and other major offenses a student will automatically receive an office discipline referral (ODR). After the six week period, all students' behavior trackers of minor offenses are thrown out, giving each student a fresh start. For the purpose of this paper only the office discipline referrals were counted.

Beginning of year to December ODRs



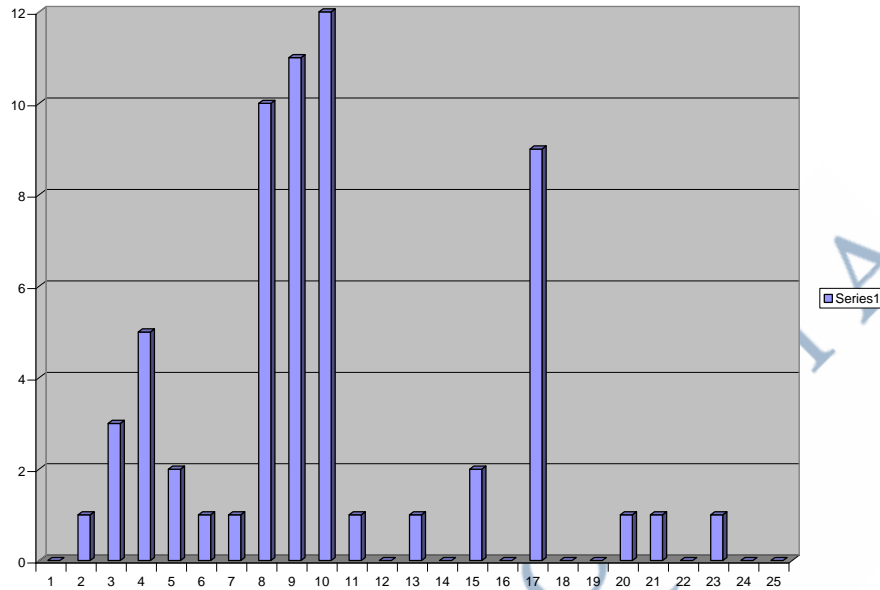
December to March ODRs



These graphs show many interesting trends. First, it is very clear the junior high students struggle much more than the high school students. Particularly, the eighth graders struggled to follow the school-wide expectations. After noticing this trend the researcher began to look a little closer into this group of students to determine why and when these students were receiving office discipline referrals.

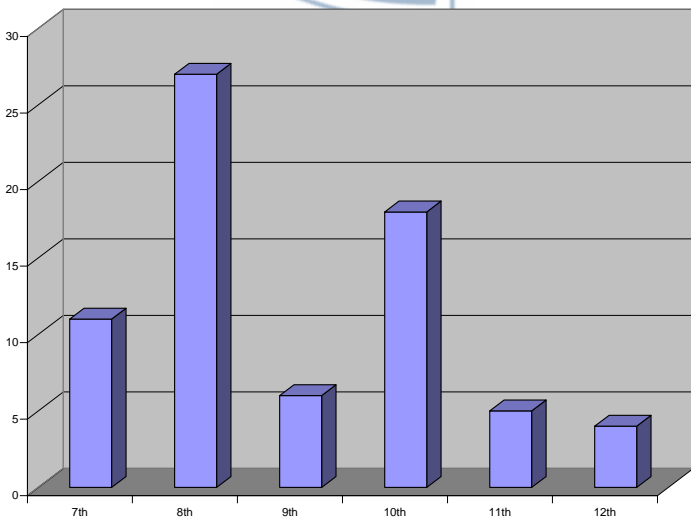
Another trend, was that students appeared to be more off task and likely to receive referrals after lunch or right after break. Transitions were also a difficult time for students. After discussing with a number of teachers it seemed if there was a warm-up activity on the board right when the students walked in it helped encourage them to settle down and get focused. This concept was presented to the staff by the PBS team. Teachers further brainstormed various ideas for warm-up activities in all subject areas. Continuing to keep consistency throughout the classrooms is a great tool in helping all students become successful.

Beginning of the year to March eighth graders only

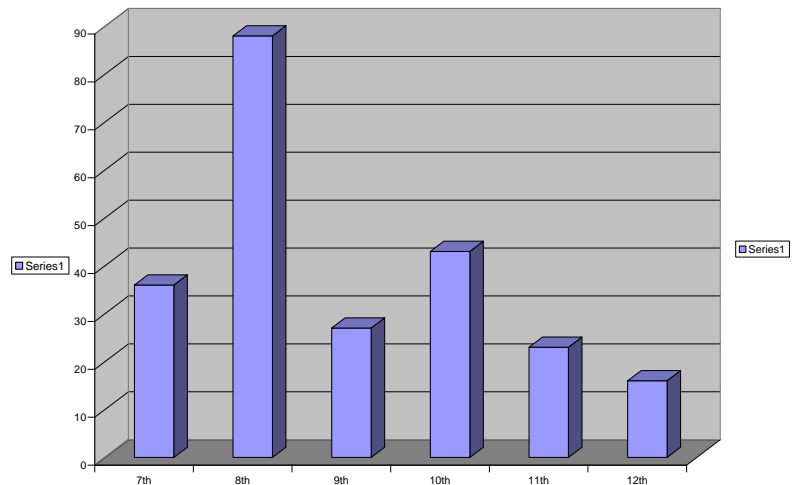


After looking at the eighth grade data by individual students it became clear there were just a handful of eighth grade students that seemed to really struggle with following the school-wide expectations. To help encourage these students to get on track the PBS team decided to set up individual rewards for specific students, as well as encouraging teachers of these students to try and catch them doing something right as often as possible rewarding them with a paw point.

March to June ODRs



End of the year overall ODRs



By the end of the year the amount of ODRs had decreased slightly. The total ODRs in the first part of the year were 82 it then decreased to 80 and then to 71. The decrease was not large but there was a decrease. The connection between the decreases in overall ODRs from last year to this year was interesting. Last year the total ODRs was 957 compared to this year with a total of 233. This decrease looks to be large because the process for ODRs was changed. Students were given many more chances before actually receiving an office discipline referral. With the older students, particularly the 11th and 12th graders, the majority of the ODRs came from excessive tardies (three tardies in the same class within six weeks).

Another trend that was noticed was once students reached high school they have matured and were less likely to engage in negative behaviors. This trend appears to be true with all groups expect for the 10th graders. This group of students had the second highest number of ODRs.

Positive Behavior Tracking

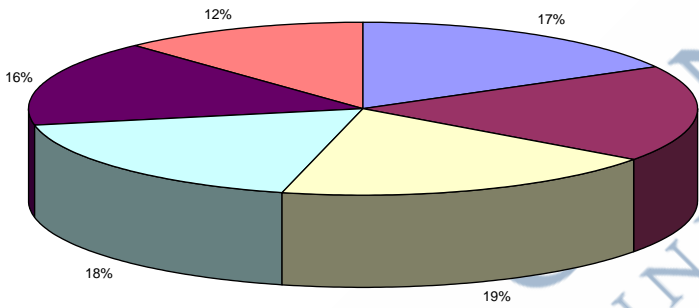
Throughout the year Paw Points were handed out by the staff, rewarding and encouraging students' good/positive behaviors. At the end of each semester the researcher collected and tally all the students paw points for the rewards assembly. Keep in mind, while looking at the data approximately

- 15% of the students are 7th graders,
- 16% are 8th graders,
- 20% are 9th graders,

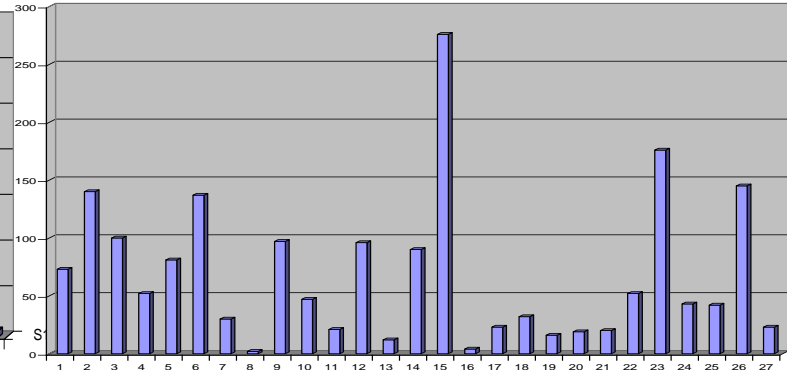
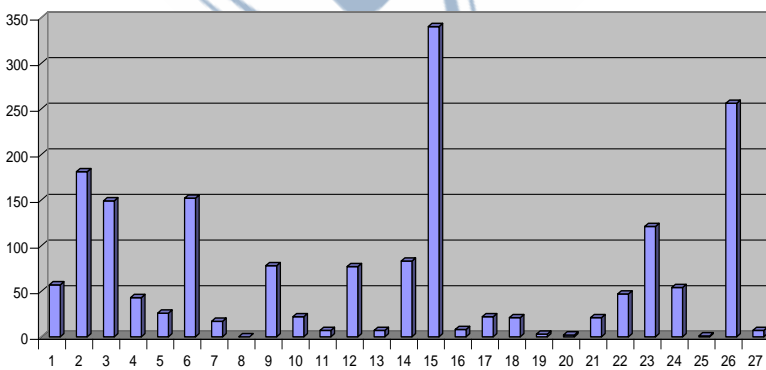
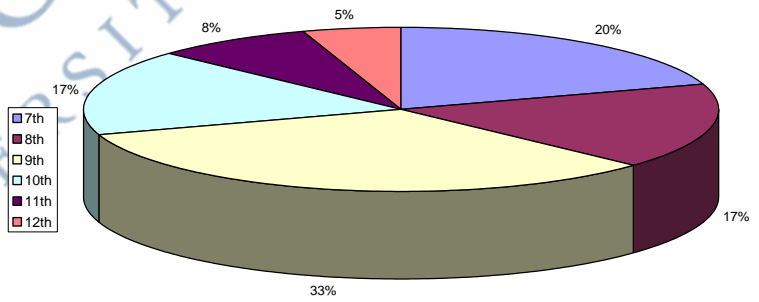
- 18% are 10th graders,
- 18% are 11th graders and
- 13% are 12th graders.

The pie charts show the percent of paw points received by grade level and the bar charts show the number of paw points handed out by teachers each semester.

First semester:



Second semester:



The pie charts show all age levels were receiving paw points. The seventh and ninth graders seemed to receive the majority of the paw points. These two groups of students also seemed the most excited about receiving paw points according to teachers. For the older students paw points did not seem to be much of a motivator. These students did not have the desire to receive this external reward; many of these students reported they would throw away paw points instead of turning them in.

The bottom two graphs show the number of paw points handed out by each staff member including bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers and substitutes. It seems that mostly all members of this school handed out paw points, some were more generous than others. Some teachers reported they did not feel the need to give a student a paw point every time they did something good. Students had to go above expectations in order to receive a paw point where as other teachers would give out paw points anytime a student did what was asked.

Summary Behavior and Positive Behavior Tracking

After reviewing the data on ODRs it was very clear the junior high students needed more reinforcement of expectations than the high school students. The majority of ODRs were given between class periods, the beginning of class or in the afternoon. One adjustment many teachers made after reviewing the data was to have a warm-up activity on the board as the students walked into class. Another adjustment was teachers were encouraged to greet students as they walked into class allowing for more supervision during passing times. There was a decrease in ODRs from last school year having 957 to this year

having a total of 233. The majority of the staff at this small school seemed to buy into the rewards system handing out paw points on a regular basis; however, not all the students bought into this system. The junior high students seem to receive the majority of the paw points as well as seemed to be much more motivated by receiving this type of positive reinforcement.

Conclusion

Over this past year the researcher believes PBS was implemented to the best ability of the staff at this school. The PBS team used various methods and put in huge amounts of time and dedication to help make this implementation a success at CHS. Meetings were held, data was collected and reviewed, students and staff members were surveyed and a rewards system was established. That is not to say there are not improvements that will be made to this program; however, the researcher believes this program will continue to be implemented.

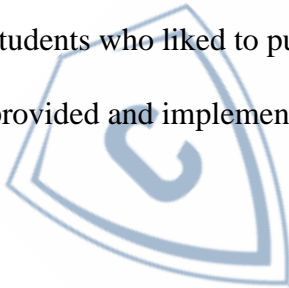
There were several advantages to this program such as: unity and consistency within the staff, more positive interactions between staff and students, students being recognized for their good behavior, a decline in negative interactions (ODRs) and an all around more positive feel within the school. The only disadvantage to this program was the amount of time it takes: tracking students' behaviors, planning reward days, getting donations for rewards, writing up lessons and meeting monthly. Looking through the data it is clear this system is working at this small school and the advantages out weigh the disadvantages.

There was a large decrease in ODRs, decreasing from 957 to only having 233. This is a great accomplishment and should help encourage teachers to want to continue with PBS.

The change in how ODRs were given was the main factor in the decline, allowing for students to have chances and be reminded of the expectations before punishing them.

While a teacher was filing out a behavior tracker the teacher would usually be discussing with the student the expectation in a positive manner, encouraging the student and giving them the opportunity to improve their behavior. This positive interaction proved to benefit all students.

Looking at the data, the eighth grade students who seemed to not understand how to adhere to the school-wide expectations were hardly ever being positively reinforced. These students had little Paw Points and usually were never able to participate in the reward activities. Missing out on the positive reinforcements proved to really hinder their positive behavior growth. Teachers needed to make more of an effort to catch students following expectations and positively rewarding them. There will always be those certain students who liked to push the limits; however, overall the positive reinforcement provided and implemented throughout this year have really impact this school.



Suggestions for Future Study

Another study of PBS could focus on different ways to track positive reinforcements because some students do not turn in their paw points and some will tell teachers they do not need paw points. These students do not need the extrinsic reinforcement that others

need; therefore, they are not part of the data. The lack of information on these students skews the data. There still needs to be something for these students who do not feel they need the Paw Point.

Minor offensives every six weeks could be monitored. It would be interesting to know how many students came close each period to receiving an office discipline referral but never actually did. Did calling the parents each time and reminding the students they were on their last chance help encourage them to stay on-task and keep a positive behavior in the class? Also were certain students misbehaving in every class crying out for help but nobody ever noticed because teachers never compared their behavior trackers?

Lastly, it would be an interesting investigation to attempt tie academic performance into the rewards system.



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