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## *School Readiness and the Steps for PBSS Implementation*

In any endeavor, to be successful, you must begin with the end in mind.

Stephen Covey

### **PBSS Implementation Case Study: McDonald Elementary School, Seffner, Florida**

McDonald Elementary School is in the Hillsborough County School District of Tampa, Florida, which is the tenth largest school district in the country. In 1998, we gave the School Leadership Team (SLT) and the entire school staff at McDonald an overview of the three-year Positive Behavioral Support System (PBSS) blueprint as part of our entry process. As we continued to work with the SLT and staff, we proceeded through a multifaceted organizational and motivational analysis of the readiness of the school for PBSS implementation. One aspect of the motivational analysis involved a formal vote by the staff to reflect their commitment to the three (or more) year process. A typical benchmark for readiness is a minimum 80% vote in favor.

Throughout the readiness process, a small, vocal number of staff members expressed concerns about (their resistance to) the initiative. When the vote was taken in late April, 83% of the staff voted in favor of the PBSS initiative, but the vocal negative staff members were among those who dissented—the only counselor in the building, the school's union representative, and one of the special education teachers.

In the follow-up SLT meeting in May, I expressed my concerns about the motivational readiness of the building given the dissenting staff and their formal and informal influence in the school. I recommended that we spend additional time to build the school's readiness and motivation, but the Team was not interested as the school year was ending and this would delay the first year of PBSS implementation in August. The principal replied, "I can handle the dissenters and bring them on board."

Against my better judgment, we began formal implementation in August. By the middle of the school year, it was apparent that the initiative was being undermined by the dissenters and that more dissenters had been brought on board. By the end of the year, the initiative was discontinued with no expectation that it could be resurrected by working again with the staff to rebuild the commitment needed.

## INTRODUCTION

In order to effectively implement and scale up a PBSS in a school, across multiple schools in the same district, or across a state, it is important to have an evidence-based blueprint that can be adapted to meet the individual history, norms, needs, resources, and past and present outcomes at the school, district, or state level. As discussed in Chapter 1, this blueprint is implemented systematically and systemically across an entire school, and it is integrated into its effective school and schooling processes and its continuous improvement and strategic planning activities. At a district level, the same PBSS blueprint and process should be used across all schools, although some differentiation may occur at the elementary versus secondary levels.

Beyond the blueprint, the organizational and motivation readiness of a school and its staff is essential when planning, executing, maintaining, and sustaining a PBSS initiative. In addition, the importance of schoolwide planning and organization, capacity building and the use of resources, training and supervision, and implementation and evaluation is vital. Finally, the coordination and collaboration between school and district facilitates time-, cost-, and resource use efficiency, implementation integrity, and return-on-investment. Thus, while classroom teachers and support staff are the day-to-day PBSS implementers, the availability of resources and more intensive consultative support at the school and district levels facilitates implementation, maximizes momentum, and strengthens sustainability. This chapter focuses on the organizational variables and

strategic planning processes needed when a school begins to consider a PBSS initiative. As such, we will begin with the end in mind by revisiting the most typical PBSS outcomes for a school and then describing a four-year implementation blueprint and how to prepare for its execution. Given the depth and breadth of this blueprint, this chapter is probably best read now and then reviewed after reading the remaining chapters in this book. In addition, it is essential to recognize how many individuals, groups, and committees will participate in the activities outlined here. Indeed, a schoolwide PBSS depends on schoolwide and district involvement. Thus, through this blueprint, important processes and activities are highlighted as well as how and where to link with district administrators and other resource professionals to maximize success.

While this PBSS blueprint is presented from a start-up perspective, schools that have successfully begun other more limited positive behavioral support programs can use this chapter to identify where and why they have been successful and what important value-added elements are needed to extend and strengthen their programs to a complete level of comprehensive implementation. This information also might help schools with unsuccessful programs or programs that have prematurely hit a plateau or an implementation wall to identify initial missteps, existing gaps, or activities that need to be revisited.

## **GOALS OF A SCHOOLWIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT SYSTEM**

One of the first things that school staff members should do when beginning a new PBSS initiative is to think about (a) their desired or expected PBSS-related student, staff, and school goals and outcomes; (b) the current status of the school, staff, and students, and the school's outcomes over at least the last three years; (c) areas where they are not achieving desired PBSS-related outcomes (i.e., where there are negative, nonexistent, or slower-than-desired outcomes); and (d) the reasons for the school's existing accomplishments and non-accomplishments. By integrating all of this information with the primary PBSS goals and outcomes discussed in Chapter 1, the staff members should agree upon a core set of realistic and meaningful PBSS goals that need to be accomplished and that will guide their planning and initial implementation process.

Schools that are evaluating an existing positive behavioral support initiative need to consider and analyze the same four areas above. Sometimes, schools with existing positive behavioral support programs struggle because (a) they have not targeted students' social, emotional, and behavioral competency and self-management as their primary goal; (b) they have limited their focus to a single, deficit-related outcome (typically, decreasing office discipline referrals); and/or (c) they have not targeted

important staff and school goals that contribute to student self-management outcomes. By considering the PBSS goals and objectives in Chapter 1 and the implementation elements and strategies throughout this book, schools using a different positive behavioral support model or approach may add essential components that result in deeper and more sustained outcomes and more comprehensive success.

Typically, the initial planning process that results in the identification of a school's core PBSS goals and outcomes is coordinated by the SLT (see Chapter 3), often in collaboration with the district administrators who oversee the following areas: health, mental health, and wellness; discipline, behavior management, and services for students with social, emotional, or behavioral challenges; and school safety and security. As the process proceeds, the PBSS goals and outcomes and the action steps needed to accomplish them are written into the school's annual school improvement plan, and the SLT actively facilitates their implementation. Eventually, most of these planning and execution processes are transferred to the school discipline/PBSS committee that also becomes responsible for recommending the school's annual PBSS activities as the initiative progresses, expands, and succeeds.

## **A FOUR-YEAR PBSS IMPLEMENTATION BLUEPRINT**

With the PBSS goals as a foundation, a four-year PBSS implementation blueprint is recommended for schools just beginning this process. Naturally, this blueprint may progress more quickly for schools (and districts) that have some elements already in place, and it might take longer for schools that need to secure resources, build capacity, or implement different elements more slowly. In the latter situation, school leaders need to recognize that a longer phase-in time might weaken momentum and motivation, especially if staff members do not see enough progress or positive outcomes over time. In the former situation, leaders should not move too quickly, putting implementation speed ahead of staff buy-in and consensus, the acquisition and deployment of resources, and the necessity for professional development and guidance.

The four-year PBSS blueprint devotes one year to planning and three years to phased-in implementation. During the planning year, activities within the blueprint involve the strategic planning and organizational analysis and development; behavioral instruction and intervention (PBSS); data management, evaluation, and accountability; and the parent and community training, support, and outreach components of the effective schools model discussed in Chapter 1. During actual implementation, all seven of the effective school and schooling components are involved. Below is an outline of the four-year PBSS planning and implementation process at the school level. Many of the actions and activities described can be adapted for use at the district level.

## **THE PLANNING YEAR: PRE-IMPLEMENTATION YEAR 1**

Pre-implementation Year 1 activities involve three focus areas: (a) choosing a PBSS model and evaluating staff readiness; (b) organizational readiness and planning; and (c) preparation for implementation. These activities are organized below in a loose sequence, although many of them can be coordinated and completed at the same time. The pre-implementation year may extend across an entire school year or it may be concentrated from January through June. Regardless, in most cases, the first formal year of implementation starts just before the beginning of a new school year. Thus, those involved in PBSS planning and preparation need to complete the activities below so that the pre-implementation year moves seamlessly into the next year of formal implementation.

### **Focus Area 1. Choosing a PBSS Model or Approach and Evaluating the Motivational Readiness of the Staff and Others for the PBSS Initiative**

**Action 1.1: Initial PBSS Interest and Research Review and Study Team Selection.** A school or district becomes interested in implementing a PBSS, and an initial research review and internet search of its generic goals, objectives, evidence-based components, activities, and outcomes is completed. The results of this review are reported to the entire faculty and, by virtue of a consensus of the faculty and the support of the administration, the SLT or a PBSS task force or study team with cross-staff representation is chosen to lead this part of the initiative.

**Action 1.2: Initial Collection of Three Years of PBSS-Related School Data and Information.** The study team collects at least three years of existing PBSS-related data, information, and outcomes from and about the school. This is collected from federal (Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), state, district, and school report cards and related databases and includes, for example, information about (a) student achievement and engagement; (b) students' social, emotional, behavioral health, mental health, and wellness status, programs, and needs; (c) perceptions and indicators of positive school climate and school safety; (d) office discipline referrals, student suspensions and expulsions, and special education or alternative school referrals and placements due to student behavior; (e) staff professional development and impact; and (f) parent and community involvement and outreach initiatives and outcomes.

**Action 1.3: Completion of School Status and Longitudinal History Self-Study.** Based on the self-study or self-evaluation in Action 1.2 above, the study team determines the current status of the school, staff, and students,

and the school's PBSS-related outcomes over at least the last three years; problem areas and areas where the school is not achieving desired outcomes (i.e., where there are negative, nonexistent, or slower-than-desired outcomes); and reasons for the identified accomplishments and non-accomplishments. This begins the process of identifying what PBSS-related issues or outcomes the school needs to address through the chosen PBSS program or initiative and what existing activities or programs need to be maintained or discontinued, respectively.

**Action 1.4: Completion of Staff, Stakeholder, and Consumer Motivational Analysis.** As Actions 1.2 through 1.3 are proceeding, the study team or SLT completes a motivational analysis of the support, the potential support, and the opposition to the PBSS initiative across its staff and other stakeholder, constituency, and consumer groups, including community partners and parents. Through this analysis, the SLT also identifies those willing to publicize their commitment to the initiative and takes steps to gain the support of those who are on the fence or in opposition.

**Action 1.5: Identification and Analysis of Effective PBSS Schools; PBSS Request for Proposals.** If the study team wants to expand its Action 1.1 research review and internet search by identifying a number of already-existing effective PBSS programs, it locates these successful PBSS schools—nationally or within its state—matching them to the school's demographic and other student and staff characteristics. For schools willing to share their experiences and expertise, telephone or net-supported interviews, and/or virtual or actual school visitations then can occur.

**Action 1.6: Choosing the Best PBSS Model and/or Project Director for the School.** In order to choose the best PBSS model or approach, the study team matches the implementation and outcomes from the PBSS models or approaches researched in Action 1.1 to the problem areas and needs resulting from Action 1.3. At this point, especially if the school is going to independently implement the chosen PBSS model or approach, the team may have enough information to recommend a single model to its SLT and school staff.

If the school is planning to work with an outside (contracted) PBSS project director (or consultant) who will guide the implementation process, a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) asking for descriptions of applicants' background and expertise as well as the PBSS models that they use may be needed. Eventually, the team should interview the top two or three project director applicants responding to the RFP to determine who and whose model is best suited to their school. This process may include visits to one or more PBSS schools using each applicant, interviews, reviews of materials and products, and reference checks. As part of the interview process, each applicant might come on-site to the school, do a presentation for the PBSS study team or the entire staff, and meet with small groups of staff to allow for questions and discussion.

If the school is planning to use an internal (district- or school-employed) PBSS project director, the identification and selection process should be determined and implemented.

**Action 1.7: Final PBSS Model and Project Director Recommendation.** Here, the study team makes a final decision on its recommended PBSS model, approach, and PBSS project director and shares these results with the SLT and administration.

**Action 1.8: Faculty Briefing, Discussion, Decision on PBSS Model and Project Director.** With the endorsement of the SLT and administration, the study team shares their recommendation on the PBSS model, approach, and project director with the entire staff. Prior to this announcement, the administration and SLT need to decide how the staff will be involved in the final decision. That is, for example, are they advisory to an administrative decision, do they have a formal vote in the final decision, or is their consent desired but not necessary? Regardless of their formal or informal involvement, a staff consensus of at least 80% support typically is recommended to proceed.

**Action 1.9: Administrative Agreement and Contracting.** If needed, the school administrator discusses the formally recommended (and agreed upon) PBSS model, approach, and project director with the district administration and, if needed, the school board. If an external PBSS project director is used, he or she should agree to work with the school based on the match between his or her skills and expertise and the school's need for and commitment to the chosen PBSS model. If needed, contracts or memoranda of agreement with the PBSS project director are written and signed with the school or district.

**Action 1.10: Initial Implementation Plan for Planning Meeting.** An initial plan for planning meeting with the SLT, the PBSS study team, selected others, and the new PBSS project director (if relevant) is held. During this one (or multiple) meeting(s), a PBSS implementation readiness action plan is written that outlines the steps, activities, timelines, people, and resources needed for the next phase of PBSS implementation. Included in these next steps are a more formal needs assessment and resource analysis; the selection and formation of a building-level school discipline/PBSS committee (see Chapter 3); a review of the school's Response-to-Instruction and Intervention/School Prevention Review, and Intervention Team structure and process (see Chapter 3); the selection of a social skills program (see Chapter 5) and the development of a schoolwide behavioral accountability system through the Behavioral Matrix (see Chapter 4); and the execution of a number of critical end-of-year articulation or new-school-year preparation activities (see Chapter 10).

**Action 1.11: Formal Public Announcement and Kickoff.** The school administrator announces to the entire staff, as well as to the parents and

community stakeholders and constituents, the final approval of the PBSS model and project director, and the tentative steps and timelines that will occur in the next phase of PBSS readiness.

**Action 1.12: Disbanding of the Study Team.** The study team is disbanded and thanked for its service to the school.

## Focus Area 2. PBSS Organizational Readiness and Planning

Many of the next actions are guided by the new PBSS project director (if relevant), the SLT, any newly established committees (e.g., the school discipline/PBSS committee, the School Prevention, Review, and Intervention Team [SPRINT]), and the school's administration.

**Action 2.1: Formation or Confirmation of the School Discipline/PBSS Committee and the Grade- and Building-Level SPRINT Teams and Structure.** The SLT reviews the school's committee structure and establishes building-level school discipline/PBSS committee and grade- and building-level SPRINT teams if they do not yet exist (see Chapter 3). The discipline/PBSS committee will become responsible for guiding the implementation of the schoolwide PBSS process with the PBSS director. The SPRINT teams are the early intervention teams that implement the data-based functional assessment problem-solving process (see Chapter 8) when students do not academically or behaviorally respond to effective classroom instruction and classroom management.

**Action 2.2: Selection of the School Discipline/PBSS Committee Chair, Recording Secretary, and Members' Terms of Office.** Supported by the administration, a committee chair (or co-chairs) of the school discipline/PBSS committee is (are) selected. If the PBSS project director is a member of the school's staff, he or she will typically be the committee chair. The committee also selects a recording secretary, a monthly meeting time (although the committee may need to meet more frequently during start-up), and the terms of office for different committee members (see Chapter 3).

**Action 2.3: Completion of the Committee Mission, Role, and Function Document.** During the next weeks or months, the school discipline/PBSS committee completes its committee mission, role, and function statement or document (see Chapter 3). In this document are the committee's mission, members, monthly meeting time and place, general and annual goals and objectives, fixed agenda items, and primary data and information sources.

Eventually, the school needs to integrate necessary school and district policies, practices, personnel, resources, waivers, and professional development into its three-year and next-year school improvement plan and have it approved at the district level.

**Action 2.4: Completion of a Comprehensive Needs Assessment and Resource Analysis.** With the PBSS director's involvement, the SLT completes a (or reviews its existing) needs assessment and resource analysis. The needs assessment expands on the data and information collected in Action 1.2 and analyzed during Action 1.3. The goal is to identify (a) what is working at high, moderate, low, and nonexistent levels relative to students' academic and social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes; (b) what is needed, at student, staff, school, district, and community levels to maintain high successes, strengthen moderate successes, and address low and nonexistent successes; and (c) how the needs should be prioritized.

Complementing the needs assessment is a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis completed, again, at student, staff, school, district, community, and regional or state levels. This analysis identifies existing resources (e.g., personnel, time, money, materials, products, buy-in, professional development, technology, innovation) and their return-on-investment (ROI) relative to time, cost, and effort. When cross-walked with the needs assessment, this analysis specifies the existing supports available to facilitate the PBSS initiative, organizational and resource gaps to close, existing barriers to overcome, and other factors that threaten to undermine the initiative.

**Action 2.5: Completion of the Staff Resource Directory.** As part of the resource analysis, the SLT develops a questionnaire and conducts a staff "skill and expertise" analysis to determine the expertise of everyone working full-time or part-time in the school (including, for example, all part-time or consulting related services professionals or community/agency professionals or volunteers). On the questionnaire, staff share their specific areas of expertise, for example, relative to (a) curriculum and academic instruction; (b) student behavior and classroom management; (c) technology or special instructional techniques; (d) student assessment and progress monitoring; (e) strategic or intensive academic and social, emotional, or behavioral instruction or intervention techniques; and (f) other areas of expertise, including out-of-school talents, hobbies, and interests. The goal of this activity is to identify the skills and resources that already exist in a school and to make everyone in the school aware of the different people who are available to consult with others in specific areas.

All of this information is published in a staff resource directory. This resource can be posted on the shared drive of the school's computer system, and it can be used informally by classroom teachers or more formally as part of the school's early intervening and multi-tiered SPRINT process.

**Action 2.6: Completion of the Consultant Resource Directory.** Beyond the school, districts should also prepare and publish a consultant resource directory, describing the specific skills of the instructional specialists or consultants, related services professionals, special educators, counselors or behavioral intervention specialists, and others with advanced areas of

expertise who work in schools or other settings across the district. This directory helps schools find and obtain the expertise and consultative services from other parts of the district when they lack, for example, specific expertise for a student with unusual, complex, or intensive assessment, instructional, or intervention needs.

**Action 2.7: Completion of the Behavioral Intervention Survey.** As the staff and consultant resource directories are being created, participating staff also should complete an in-depth survey of their expertise across a number of specific Tier 1 through Tier 3 social, emotional, and behavioral interventions that might be needed by certain students or in certain situations (see Chapters 1, 9, and 10). The behavioral intervention survey, for example, describes a number of specific interventions and asks respondents to rate their expertise with each intervention along a five-point scale from 5—Expert in Both Consultation and Implementation to 1—No Knowledge of the intervention. The results of this survey are used to identify both the intervention expertise of specific professionals in the school and district and the intervention gaps that might require systematic professional development for selected professionals.

**Action 2.8: Completion of the Community Resource Directory.** Beyond school and district employees and consultants, the district also should prepare and publish a community resource directory—especially in the areas of social, emotional, and behavioral, or health, mental health, and wellness. The directory should specify the degrees and certifications or board licensure areas of expertise of anyone working in a specific agency or for any private practitioner or group practice. In addition, the types of student disorders addressed by agency personnel or private practitioners, the psychological orientations used (e.g., cognitive-behavioral, family systems, psychodynamic), and the specific clinical techniques available should be outlined. Finally, the scope of services, populations served, specific qualifying criteria (if any), and indicators of clinical success should be shared. With this directory, schools and districts can make strategic community-based referrals of students and parents when needed. The directory is particularly important when coordinating home-school-community, wrap-around, or continuum systems of care services for students with complex, significant, or multifaceted needs.

**Action 2.9: Completion of the Scale of Staff Interactions and School Cohesion and Scale of Effective School Discipline and Safety.** In order to evaluate the staff's perceptions of how well they interact with each other and the administration and of the existing discipline and behavior management attitudes and interactions across the school, the 25-item *Scale of Staff Interactions and School Cohesion* and the 58-item *Scale of Effective School Discipline and Safety* are completed (see Chapter 10). The results of these scales should be shared with the faculty at a meeting so they can be

validated, clarified, and discussed. Activities to address the needs based on the results of the scales and follow-up discussions eventually are written into the PBSS section of the school improvement plan.

**Action 2.10: Development of the Committee Implementation Plans.** Based on the completed comprehensive needs assessment and resource analysis (Action 2.4), the school discipline/PBSS committee writes a three-year PBSS implementation plan and a one-year plan that is submitted to the SLT for integration into the next school improvement plan. An implementation preparation plan (if needed) also is written to cover the activities needed prior to Implementation Year 1 (see below).

**Action 2.11: Review and Alignment of School and District Policies With PBSS Directions.** If needed, the school makes sure that all of its internal policies are consistent with the existing PBSS initiative and its planned directions. The school discipline/PBSS committee, SLT, and administration discuss needed additions or changes to school or district policies and procedures—securing them either through the district’s administration or school board or by receiving a waiver from those that cannot be changed.

**Action 2.12: Review and Alignment of School Vision and Mission Statements With PBSS Directions.** Based on all of the results and actions above, the SLT looks at its vision statement (if applicable) and mission statement to ensure that they are consistent with the PBSS initiative, making any changes desired or needed.

### Focus Area 3. Preparation for PBSS Implementation

**Action 3.1: Review and Redesign of Existing PBSS Multi-tiered System of Implementation.** The discipline/PBSS committee reviews the programs, strategies, and approaches currently in place in the school that represent the current multi-tiered system of prevention, strategic instruction or intervention, and intensive needs and crisis management. This process identifies the strengths, weaknesses, barriers, gaps, and needs that should be addressed immediately, in the short term or in the long term. This process may result in a redesign of the multi-tiered system (see Chapter 1) to facilitate the accomplishment of specific PBSS goals and outcomes.

**Action 3.2: Review of the PBSS Data Collection and Management System.** The discipline/PBSS committee reviews the components of the existing PBSS data collection, tracking, analysis, and management resources and tools (e.g., software, databases, and other computer- or web-based programs), and their efficacy relative to helping the school to enter, organize, summarize, display, track, and evaluate PBSS data and information (see Chapter 10). Based on the results, the committee works with the administration, the school district’s technology personnel, committee

members, and others to design and set up the needed databases and other software or data management systems to close any apparent gaps.

**Action 3.3: Review of the Social, Emotional, Behavioral Instruction System/Process.** As part of Action 3.1 above, the discipline/PBSS committee reviews the programs, strategies, and approaches currently in place in the school that focus on teaching students social, emotional, and behavioral skills and their outcomes (see Chapter 5). These are cross-referenced to any state or district requirements in the areas of health, behavioral or mental health, and wellness. For example, at the secondary level, such requirements often involve topics related to drugs and alcohol, social skills and character education, cultural sensitivity and competence, bullying and sexual harassment, and sexual health and relationships.

As one result of this review, the committee validates or creates a scaffolded health, mental health, and wellness scope and sequence or curriculum map that includes the specific social, emotional, and behavioral topics and skills that will be taught across the grade levels in its school. A second result is that the committee validates the current social, emotional, and behavioral curriculum currently being used in the school, or it decides to research and choose a new approach.

**Action 3.4: Validation or Selection of a Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Curriculum or Instruction Process.** If the discipline/PBSS committee decides to pursue a new social, emotional, and behavioral skill instruction curriculum, it completes a systematic review and analysis of the evidence-based curricula available, and it chooses the curriculum that best meets its student-focused goals, outcomes, and needs. It then secures the permission and funding so that all of the necessary implementation materials are purchased and available prior to implementation year one.

**Action 3.5: Development of the Behavioral Accountability Matrix.** Guided by the grade-level representatives on the school discipline/PBSS committee, the Behavioral Matrix—a document that codifies the behavioral expectations at each grade level in the school—is completed (see Chapter 4). The Behavioral Matrix is the anchor to the PBSS's accountability process. It identifies expected behaviors in the classrooms and common areas of the school connected with positive responses, incentives, and rewards and four intensity levels of inappropriate behavior (from annoying behavior through code of conduct offenses) connected with research-based responses that hold students accountable for their inappropriate behavior while reinforcing and motivating future appropriate behavior.

Once the behavioral matrices are completed, the school discipline/PBSS committee prepares the staff for the implementation rollout of the process across the school and ensures that support materials and other necessities (e.g., Behavioral Matrix posters for all classrooms) are ready for the rollout.

**Action 3.6: Social Skills Preparation by the Staff.** Once the social, emotional, and behavioral curriculum chosen by the school or district is received (see Action 3.4), the school discipline/PBSS committee coordinates a book study whereby the materials are progressively read by everyone in the school and each reading assignment is discussed in small groups. This is an important step that precedes, if it is to occur, the formal in-service training where all staff are trained in how to implement the curriculum or program.

**Action 3.7: Drafting of the Social Skills Calendar With Classroom and Building Routines.** Given the results of Actions 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6, the school discipline/PBSS committee drafts a beginning-of-the-year social skills and student accountability implementation calendar in April or May. This calendar includes the rollout of the Behavioral Matrix accountability system on the first day of the new school year, teaching and reinforcing expectations and routines in the common areas of the school and in the classrooms, and teaching the social, emotional, and behavioral skills curriculum across the school year.

**Action 3.8: Completion of the Get-Go and Student Briefing Reports Process.** If ready, the school should complete the Get-Go process (see Chapter 10) in April. This end-of-year process involves a review of the academic and behavioral progress of all students and identification of students who need immediate interventions at the beginning of the new school year (“Get-Go” students) and those whose next-year’s teachers need to be briefed as to the instructional and intervention approaches that helped them be successful this year (“At-Risk” students). Related to this activity is the completion of Student Briefing Reports for the students by their current teachers. These reports are given to the new teachers receiving these students prior to the beginning of the new school year.

**Action 3.9: Special Situations Analysis.** If possible, the school discipline/PBSS committee should complete a special situation analysis (see Chapters 6, 7, and 10) in April of student behavior in the common areas of the school, and relative to teasing, taunting, bullying, harassment, hazing, and physical aggression. Based on the results of this analysis, the committee could complete a focused special situation analysis on one of the areas identified to develop an intervention plan to address the selected area at the beginning of the next school year.

## Implementation Year 1

As noted above, Implementation Year 1 typically starts at the beginning of a new school year during the staff preparation days just prior to the students returning to school. The activities below are largely coordinated by the school discipline/PBSS committee, but, given the interdependence

between students' academic and social, emotional, and behavioral success, virtually all of the other school-level committees are involved at some point. This is especially true of the SPRINT teams who use the data-based functional assessment problem-solving process (see Chapter 8) when individual students are exhibiting progressive, resistant, or significantly challenging behavior. The activities below are organized in a preferred, but not absolute, sequence. Individual schools, guided by their SLT and school discipline/PBSS committees, need to make strategic decisions, based on staff, resources, and other aspects of their school improvement plan, as to the best timing and approaches for implementation.

*Implementation Year 1, Semester 1*

**Action 1.1: Initial School Discipline/PBSS Committee Meeting.** During the staff preparation days prior to the new school year, the school discipline/PBSS committee should have its first meeting of the year. During this meeting, it should review its annual goals, objectives, outcomes, and activities as well as the upcoming training and other events that will begin the schoolwide PBSS process for the new school year. If needed, group and other processes to help the committee function effectively will be reviewed along with any important information based on events during the summer.

**Action 1.2: Social Skills Training for the Entire Staff.** During the staff preparation days prior to the new school year, the entire staff participates in a full-day in-service training to learn the buildingwide implementation of the chosen social, emotional, and behavioral skills program.

This in-service should be followed up during the first weeks of school with (a) grade- or instructional-team meetings to allow teachers to develop and practice selected social skill lessons, (b) observations of social skill demonstrations in the classrooms by the primary in-service trainers (with opportunities to debrief these experiences), and (c) the implementation of real social skill lessons by all classroom teachers with appropriate supervision and feedback.

**Action 1.3: First Day and Week of School PBSS Activities.** Guided by the grade-level representatives on the school discipline/PBSS committee, the PBSS Behavioral Matrix and accountability system is rolled out on the first day of the new school year emphasizing and teaching the classroom and common school area expectations and behaviors as well as the system of incentives and consequences. In addition, classroom teachers begin to introduce the social skills curriculum and to teach the initial processes and skills.

**Action 1.4: Extended Social Skills and Time-Out Training.** Within the first six weeks of the school year, all staff members participate in additional in-service training to debrief and extend the buildingwide implementation

of the social, emotional, and behavioral skills program to new and more complex skills and situations. In addition, the staff members have an opportunity to discuss the initial implementation of the Behavioral Matrix system and unexpected or unintended behavioral situations or outcomes. Finally, especially at the elementary and middle school levels, staff members are trained in a buildingwide application of an educative time-out process (see Chapter 9) which is integrated into the Behavioral Matrix and office discipline referral processes.

**Action 1.5: School Discipline/PBSS Committee Follow-Up and Support.** Immediately following Action 1.4 above, the PBSS director and other PBSS consultants should be available to grade-level teams and individual staff members with on-site technical assistance across a range of possible areas: demonstrating and videotaping sample social skill lessons in selected classrooms or using specific skills; demonstrating and videotaping sample time-out lessons or procedures in selected classrooms or with specific challenging students; observing and providing feedback to teachers conducting social skill lessons in their classroom; observing and providing feedback to teachers demonstrating the time-out process in their classrooms; meeting with grade-level teams to discuss the social skills or time-out process or to address specific students' more challenging behavior; meeting with the building-level school discipline team to discuss implementation issues; meeting with the administration to discuss implementation issues; and meeting with parent and community representatives to discuss building and extended community implementation and wrap-around.

**Action 1.6: Initial SPRINT Team Training.** Concurrent with the PBSS activities above, the building-level SPRINT team participates in an in-service on the data-based problem-solving process and begins to practice these skills using a guided case study approach.

**Action 1.7: End-of-Semester Formative Evaluations.** At the end of the semester, the school discipline/PBSS committee, in collaboration with the administration and SLT, conducts formative evaluations on the different facets of the PBSS so that strategic plans and implementation activities and processes can be adapted as needed. This review should especially focus on the social skills training and the Behavioral Matrix process. If needed, modifications to the social skills calendar and to specific behaviors on the Behavioral Matrices can be made at this time.

#### *Implementation Year 1, Semester 2*

From January through the remainder of the first year, the school discipline/PBSS committee continues to meet at least monthly to plan, implement, and evaluate PBSS activities and data. Within the grade-level teams, teachers continue to implement, evaluate, and monitor the social skills,

accountability, and consistency processes in their classrooms. The school discipline/PBSS committee, meanwhile, continues to support and periodically review the classroom, grade-level, and buildingwide accountability system; collect formative evaluation data; determine the need for additional social skills, time-out, or behavioral intervention training for the staff; track the use of the social skill process by secretaries, paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, and custodians; develop drafts of the building's crisis response plans and processes (see Chapter 6); and extend the initiative's training and implementation into home and community settings.

**Action 2.1: Schoolwide SPRINT Training.** In January, a third schoolwide in-service is provided on the data-based functional assessment problem-solving process that teaches staff members how to functionally and behaviorally analyze students who are not responding to the preventive aspects of the PBSS system and who are presenting with more resistant or challenging behavior.

**Action 2.2: Grade-Level SPRINT Practice.** Once the Action 2.1 training has been completed, grade-level teams meet at least monthly to use and practice the data-based functional assessment problem-solving process, applying it to cases involving individual or groups of students presenting with challenging behaviors. These meetings are facilitated by a representative of the building-level SPRINT team (e.g., the school psychologist, social worker, school counselor, or special education teacher) so that the problem-solving process is practiced and used with integrity. This helps to establish the grade-level SPRINT process (see Chapter 3) that becomes a routine part of the monthly grade-level meetings in the school.

**Action 2.3: Formal Special Situations Analysis Training for the School Discipline/PBSS Committee.** If it has not yet taken place, the school discipline/PBSS committee is formally trained in how to conduct special situation analyses and develop special situation intervention plans based on their results.

**Action 2.4: Extended Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Intervention Training for Selected Staff Members.** During the course of this semester (or school year), and based on the results of the behavioral intervention survey (and other tools), selected staff members participate in strategic and intensive training in specific social, emotional, and behavioral intervention areas. For example, selected members of the school discipline/PBSS committee may receive more specialized training in Tier 1 and 2 (see Chapter 1 and 9) interventions, while members of the building-level SPRINT team may receive more specialized training in Tier 2 and 3 interventions.

**Action 2.5: End-of-Year Articulation Activities.** At the end of the school year, the school discipline/PBSS committee, along with all other staff,

committees, and administrators, complete the PBSS-relevant articulation activities (see Chapter 10). At a minimum, this involves the strategic planning, committee, social skills, Behavioral Matrix, Get-Go and Student Briefing Report, and professional development planning articulation activities.

**Action 2.6: End-of-Year Formative Evaluations.** At the end of the school year, the school discipline/PBSS committee, in collaboration with the administration and SLT, conducts formative and summative (as relevant) evaluations on the different facets of the PBSS so that new strategic plans and implementation activities and processes can be identified and written into the new school improvement plan.

**Action 2.7: Summer Facilitators' Institute.** During June at the end of Year 1, the PBSS director (and others) may lead a summer institute for staff members who wish to become PBSS facilitators. During this institute, prospective facilitators learn how to (a) provide the in-service and professional development training needed in different areas of PBSS implementation, including the SPRINT data-based functional assessment problem-solving process; (b) implement the corresponding building- and classroom-based technical support and consultation follow-up such that the content of the professional development is implemented with integrity; and (c) coordinate the data collection and analysis process such that formative and summative evaluations are completed to validate the impact and success of the activities implemented.

## Implementation Year 2

During Implementation Year 2, schools focus on institutionalizing as many Year 1 activities as possible, for example, the (a) consistent, school-wide implementation of the social, emotional, and behavioral skills program; (b) grade-level and schoolwide use of the Behavioral Matrix; (c) effective internal functioning of the school discipline/PBSS committee; and (d) continued, effective facilitation and support of the entire PBSS initiative by the school discipline/PBSS committee with the entire school staff and community. This institutionalization includes the SPRINT's data-based functional assessment problem-solving process as the Committee works to extend the capacity of staff to implement more intensive social, emotional, and behavioral interventions, to the greatest extent possible, in all general education classrooms.

In addition, by the beginning of Implementation Year 2, school discipline/PBSS committee meetings should be occurring monthly, complemented by at least one grade-level meeting per month (at each grade level) focusing on PBSS goals and activities. At this point (if not before), grade-level teams should be receiving monthly reports that give them differentiated data relative to their social skill and other outcomes, including

the number of office discipline referrals that occurred the previous month compared with data from the same month during previous years. Using these data, teams can compare and contrast each year's students and track their ongoing progress. Grade-level teams also can use their meeting times to problem solve more complex or resistant individual student or group discipline or behavior management problems using the data-based functional assessment process.

Concurrent with these and other relevant activities described in the first two PBSS years above, the school discipline/PBSS committee continues to implement, evaluate, and extend their PBSS activities in the following areas: (a) helping to develop, implement, and periodically review the classroom-, grade-level, and buildingwide accountability process; (b) fine-tuning the data management system and determining the need for additional social skills, time-out, or behavioral intervention training for the staff; (c) tracking the use of the social skills process by secretaries, aides, cafeteria workers, and custodians; (d) upgrading (as needed) the building's prevention, intervention, and crisis management and response plans and processes; and (e) extending PBSS training and implementation into home and community settings.

### **Implementation Year 2 Activities**

**Action 1.1: Boosters Sessions for Previously Trained Staff on PBSS Components.** During the staff preparation days prior to the new school year and during the first month of school (as needed), booster in-service, consultation, and technical assistance sessions for all continuing staff occurs in the PBSS's social skills, time-out, data-based problem solving, and other classroom implementation components, skills, and activities.

**Action 1.2: Fast-Track Training for All New Staff on PBSS Components.** During the staff preparation days prior to the new school year and during the first month of school, fast-track training in the year one PBSS components for all new staff occurs. If available, this training is coordinated with the training provided to another PBSS school in the district that is beginning its Implementation Year 1 start-up. Regardless, this training includes concurrent mentoring by the PBSS director, selected facilitators, the school discipline/PBSS committee representative at the new teacher's grade level, and the new teacher's first-year coach or mentor (if relevant).

**Action 1.3: Staff Training on Strategic Behavioral Interventions.** During the staff preparation days prior to the new school year and during the first month of school, the entire staff participates in a full-day in-service workshop on the more strategic, classroom-based behavioral interventions that can be applied and used with more challenging students who are only partially responding to the building-based social skills and accountability system (see Chapter 9).

**Action 1.4: Strategic Intervention Consultation Follow-Up.** During the two to three months following the strategic intervention in-service in Action 1.3, on-site technical assistance is provided using actual student cases to facilitate the implementation of these interventions for existing challenging students.

**Action 1.5: Staff Training on Crisis Prevention, Management, and Response.** During the winter or spring, staff members receive training, support, and practice in how to prevent and, as needed, respond to different crisis situations (see Chapters 6 and 7). Such situations might include weather-related disasters, student or staff accidents or deaths, student fights, shootings or other acts of violence on campus, and so on. This training also involves briefings on how to handle situations involving home-based physical or sexual abuse, student harassment, student suicide threats, and other life crises. Concurrent with this training is the identification of those contacts or resources within the school, district, and community for each of the situations discussed.

**Action 1.6: Parent and Community Outreach Program.** During the winter or spring, the school discipline/PBSS committee should implement (if this has not yet occurred) a PBSS outreach program to parents, community agencies, and other community leaders and constituencies. This outreach could involve training that extends the school's PBSS, for example, to families, community-based social service and support agencies, day care or afterschool care and weekend programs, the faith community, or the business community. Alternatively, this outreach might involve a communitywide collaborative effort to extend the PBSS to as many community-based and family settings and circumstances as possible.

**Action 1.7: Continued or Extended Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Intervention Training for Selected Staff members.** During the course of this year, and based on the intervention needs of the challenging students who exist or are emerging in the school, selected school discipline/PBSS committee and SPRINT team members continue to participate in strategic and intensive training in specific social, emotional, and behavioral intervention (Tier 2 and 3) areas.

**Action 1.8: End-of-Year Articulation Activities.** At the end of the school year, the school discipline/PBSS committee, along with all other staff members, committees, and administrators, again complete the PBSS-relevant articulation activities involving, at minimum, the strategic planning, committee, social skills, Behavioral Matrix, Get-Go and Student Briefing Report, and professional development planning articulation activities (see Chapter 10).

**Action 1.9: End-of-Year Formative Evaluations.** At the end of the school year, the school discipline/PBSS committee, in collaboration with the administration and SLT, conducts formative and summative evaluations on the different facets of the PBSS so that new strategic plans and implementation activities and processes can be identified and written into the new school improvement plan.

**Action 1.10: Summer Facilitators' Institute.** During June at the end of Year 2, a summer institute is held for staff members who spent Implementation Year 2 as PBSS facilitators (this could include a second cohort of new facilitators who are beginning this advanced training). During this institute, facilitators receive advanced training and responsibilities for the coming year in the wide range of PBSS components and activities.

### Implementation Year 3

During Implementation Year 3, the consolidation and institutionalization of different PBSS activities continues through the school discipline/PBSS committee and across the school's staff. In addition, the PBSS facilitators continue to assume a more independent and leading role over the PBSS director (if one is present).

### Implementation Year 3 Activities

**Action 1.1: Training Selected Staff in Behavioral and Ecological Classroom Observation.** During the staff preparation days prior to the new school year, a select number of staff members are trained in behavioral and ecological classroom observation and how to functionally evaluate Instructional Environments and effective classroom instruction. Practice opportunities then are provided to this group during the first three months of the school year so that these staff members are available to provide these services during the last half of the school year.

**Action 1.2: Training Intervention and Other Support Staff in Consultation Processes.** During the staff preparation days prior to the new school year, the intervention specialists and other consultants working in the school are trained in consultation processes at the individual colleague, small group, and organizational levels. Practice opportunities then are provided to this group during the first three months of the school year so that these staff can integrate these processes into their day-to-day consultation interactions.

**Action 1.3: Continued Staff Training on Strategic Behavioral Interventions.** During the school year, the entire staff continues to participate in professional development activities focusing on the strategic, classroom-based

behavioral interventions that can be applied and used with more challenging students (see Chapter 9).

**Action 1.4: Continued or Extended Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Intervention Training for Selected Staff.** During the school year, selected school discipline/PBSS committee and SPRINT team members continue to participate in strategic and intensive training in specific social, emotional, and behavioral intervention (Tier 2 and 3) areas.

**Action 1.5: Continued Community and Family Outreach and School-Based Mental Health.** Analyses of the school's available intensive (Tier 3) social, emotional, and behavioral assessment and intervention resources at the family and community levels continues. This includes formalizing relations with health, mental, and wellness community practitioners, including those involved in school-based and school-linked community mental health services for crisis management and intensive need students and families.

**Action 1.6: Summer Facilitators' Institute.** During June at the end of Year 3, a facilitator's summit is held to debrief the past school year, provide any additional training or mentoring, and prepare the facilitators for their fully independent implementation of the PBSS.

## SUMMARY

The chapter provides a blueprint describing specific activities that schools should complete at the very beginning of their PBSS initiative through the end of their third year of full implementation. Embedded in this four-year blueprint are the most effective and efficient ways to accomplish the primary goals of a PBSS initiative using the effective school and schooling and PBSS components discussed in Chapter 1. It is important to recognize that this is a blueprint only. That is, schools need to use their needs assessments, resource analyses, and strategic planning processes to determine which activities to target and how to sequence them over a specific period of time. As such, some schools may complete the implementation parts of the PBSS blueprint in two years while others may take four or five.

This blueprint has been used in hundreds of schools across the country with well-documented student, staff, and school success. The remaining chapters of this book provide the specific details as to how to make this blueprint a reality at the prevention, strategic intervention, and intensive need and crisis management levels. With communication, commitment, collaboration, and a shared leadership approach, schools can implement a successful PBSS initiative resulting in social, emotional, and behavioral self-management outcomes that students will use in school, at home, and out in the community for the rest of their lives.