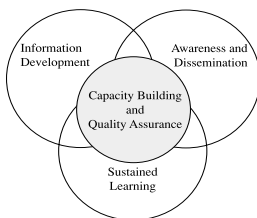




Michigan Department of Education
*Office of Special Education and
Early Intervention Services*

Positive Behavior Support
for
ALL Michigan Students:
Creating Environments
That Assure Learning
— Executive Summary —

Revised September 1, 2000



IDEA State Improvement Plan
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**For hard copies of
*Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students:
Creating Environments That Assure Learning
and this Executive Summary.***

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Letter of Support

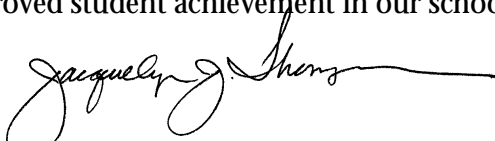
From the Director ...

The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), as amended in 1997, reflects a revolution in the theory and practice of behavior intervention. Students who experience both disability and behavioral challenges must now receive positive behavior support developed upon a foundation of functional assessment. However, the law does not define the procedures for positive behavior support. This document [*Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning*] has been developed to address this need, affording parents and practitioners the basic information needed for good faith implementation of such procedures.

While the IDEA serves as the catalyst for this initiative, positive behavior support is appropriate for ALL students who present behavior challenges. The entire educational community benefits when ALL students learn how to pursue their own legitimate needs and interests without compromising the rights and privileges of others.

The professional literature affirms the systematic practice of positive behavior support on a schoolwide basis. In addition to helping learning environments become safer and more productive, this approach offers the potential of improving the quality of life of everyone engaged in the teaching and learning process.

We anticipate the ongoing development of additional products to assist schools, families, and communities in supporting positive results for ALL students. This document is just a beginning. We hope it will prove to be a valuable resource in the pursuit of our goals for improved student achievement in our schools.



Jacquelyn J. Thompson, Ph.D., Director
Office of Special Education and
Early Intervention Services
Michigan Department of Education

Source: *Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning*, February 2000, Introduction-3



Background

This executive summary introduces readers to the document *Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning*, published in February 2000 by the Michigan Department of Education, through the Michigan State Improvement Plan (SIP). That document is a blueprint for implementing Positive Behavior Support (PBS) in Michigan schools. PBS—with its Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB), also known as Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) components—is a systematic effort that provides a means for teaching students how to act within appropriate norms, thus making schools safer so that ALL students can learn.

The PBS document is the result of a collaboration among stakeholders across Michigan who are firm in their conviction that the door to a meaningful education must not be closed to any student who could, with appropriate help, pass through. Students who persistently exhibit inappropriate behavior limit their learning opportunities and compromise teaching and the learning of others. Michigan needs schools in which ALL students are taught how to act within accepted norms. Effective schools are safe and orderly. PBS provides a way for parents, practitioners, and policy makers to commit their talent and resources to making Michigan's schools safe and effective learning environments. The PBS document affirms Michigan's conviction that it is no longer acceptable to continue with the status quo approach to problem behavior. Instead, it is time to systematically address challenging behaviors in a comprehensive, research-validated, and humane manner.

Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning was developed to initiate ongoing conversation about what really matters in the lives of our students in the hope that people who really care about ALL students will join this conversation and extend the dialogue. The PBS document is one of many valuable resources available to support informed discussion and action regarding PBS.

PBS Document - A Blueprint for Positive Behavior Support

The PBS document provides an umbrella framework for understanding the concept of PBS and guiding its practical implementation in Michigan schools. Authors of the document offer it to the field in the hope that others will be inspired to:

- Learn about PBS,
- Implement PBS in Michigan schools, and



- Enhance learning opportunities to improve the quality of life for ALL Michigan students, regardless of age, their families, school personnel, and service providers.

Developed, in part, to support Michigan's State Board of Education Goals, the State Improvement Plan, and implementation of IDEA '97, the PBS document defines, places in context, and provides recommendations for the application of functional assessment and written plans of support using the PBS approach.

The document provides:

- Strategies for self-assessment of a school system's PBS status,
- An implementation framework for PBS for ALL students,
- User-friendly resources and references, and
- Computer-accessible assessment tools.

In addition, the PBS document guides districts that are implementing PBS through setting short- and long-term goals and objectives, developing and evaluating new procedures and systems, providing ongoing feedback to staff, and involving community agencies and families at all times.

Interesting, real-life examples of PBS at work nationwide at elementary through high school levels provide anecdotal testimony to the success that can be realized through PBS. A dynamic process, PBS can be contextualized to address identification and development of the values, skills, and resources of individual situations.

Proposed changes in perspective and practice articulated in *Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning* are offered in the sincere belief that traditional methods have failed to address ongoing challenging student behaviors. The document will help readers understand what PBS is, why PBS is effective and necessary, who does it, how it is done, and how those who make the commitment to implement PBS can evaluate and support its success.

Defining Positive Behavior Support

Positive Behavior Support is a broad-based set of proactive approaches integrated within comprehensive, schoolwide systems. Such systems are communities of concern that include parents, school personnel, students, and appropriate community agency personnel. This home/school/community system supports students in learning responsible behavior and achieving academic success.



PBS is a data-based effort that concentrates on adjusting the system that supports the student. PBS is implemented by collaborative, school-based teams using person-centered planning. Schoolwide expectations for prosocial behavior are clearly stated, widely promoted, and frequently referenced. New contacts, positive experiences, powerful role models, and appropriate relationships are developed in this student-centered system. Proponents are advised that it can take time (months to years) and patience to develop the responsive systems; personalized settings; and appropriate, empowering, and enduring skills needed to sustain PBS implementation.

Learning and behavior problems are assessed comprehensively through PBS. Functional assessment of learning and/or behavior challenges is linked to an intervention that focuses on skill building. The effectiveness of the selected intervention is evaluated and reviewed, leading to data-based revisions. Change efforts emphasize the use of positive interventions that support adaptive and prosocial behavior and build on the strengths of the student, leading to an improved quality of life.

PBS thrives in a safe, well-planned, yet flexible system that fosters dignity and self-esteem for the student as well as for all those engaged in the process. Students are offered a continuum of methods that help them learn and maintain appropriate behavior and discourage violation of conduct codes.

Why Should a School or District Use Positive Behavior Support?

Positive Behavior Support effectively addresses academic and/or behavior problems through Functional Assessment of Behavior. Students benefit from modeling, system supports, and appropriate accommodations. Students become involved in efforts to change their behavior. Slowly, they begin to understand their behavior. PBS is supported by research and complements a variety of teaching approaches and classroom discipline models.

In short, PBS is a dynamic, comprehensive process for supporting any learner's academic and behavior needs. Anticipated outcomes for Michigan students include:

- Increased educational achievement as students spend more time engaged in learning and complete more classroom assignments; and
- Enhanced self-control and self-determination as students experience fewer office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions; improved conflict resolution; and better attendance.



Anticipated benefits for Michigan schools include:

- Improved school climate and interpersonal relationships;
- Increased student independence and community involvement;
- Higher graduation rates;
- Safer environments;
- Increased interagency collaboration;
- Reduced citizen dependence on public assistance, corrections, and other public services and agencies; and
- Ongoing evaluation and refinement of the education system and enhanced public confidence in education.

Getting Started with Positive Behavior Support

Since PBS is a systems approach, it requires that stakeholders share a common core of beliefs about the needs of students and about the responsibility of the system to meet those needs. Therefore, schoolwide policies and procedures must be established to reflect those beliefs. A school's capacity to initiate and sustain innovations can be increased through training and enhancing access to resources. Then, behavior norms can be clarified and communicated by: reviewing board policy; establishing and consistently enforcing school rules; providing rich, consistent positive reinforcement; communicating norms through system and schoolwide campaigns; and providing effective academic support with high expectations.

It takes a community to build a solid PBS foundation. School board members, superintendents, principals, and teachers must make PBS a school improvement priority. Parent and community support of appropriate academic and social behavior and student participation is critical. Use of assessment-based, research-validated interventions provides a good springboard for team-driven planning and implementation, which can be greatly enhanced, in turn, by visible, supportive leadership.

In a letter of support that appears in the introduction to the PBS document, Dr. Jacquelyn Thompson, Director of the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services, invites stakeholders to use the PBS document as a valuable resource in the pursuit of improved student achievement in Michigan schools. A copy of Dr. Thompson's letter appears on page 1 of this executive summary.



Building Model Positive Behavior Support Teams

Student support teams guide parents, students, teachers, and other practitioners through a collaborative process to develop strategies to help students with learning and/or behavior problems. These teams represent a growing service delivery model for students with diverse academic and social-emotional needs. A team approach to systematic problem solving and intervention planning is critical to the PBS approach, which can also involve mental health and medical providers, when appropriate.

In the PBS approach, school-based team members receive training in:

- Systems change and management principles and practices;
- Application of research-validated instructional and management practices at the school, classroom, non-classroom, and individual student levels;
- Data analysis and data-based decision making; and
- The team process and collaborative decision making.

The PBS document provides helpful, reproducible tools (e.g., checklists, assessments, surveys, reports) for determining team membership guidelines, identifying core team knowledge requirements, assessing desired skills, and establishing necessary levels of commitment to the PBS process. In addition, recommendations about details such as meeting schedules and logistics take the guesswork out of setting up a smooth plan.

Positive Behavior Support Components

Historically, the study of behavior has included both the antecedents and consequences of behavior. One of the practical strengths of Functional Assessment of Behavior and Positive Behavior Support is the “rediscovery” of the antecedents of behavior, which developed in reaction to practical applications of behavior intervention that too often overemphasize consequences. Requiring a FAB and a BIP provides a minimum standard for the consideration—or reconsideration—of the antecedents to challenging behavior.



Functional Assessment of Behavior

Functional Assessment of Behavior is an assessment process for gathering information to develop student support plans. A comprehensive FAB identifies the consequences to maintaining behaviors and the contexts in which those behaviors reflect antecedents and setting events. A FAB is flexible, in that selected interventions are linked to an informed hypothesis and are revised as needed. Data that demonstrate the effect of a selected intervention determine the need to revise the written plan of behavior support.

The four main goals of a FAB are to:

- 1) Describe behavior;
- 2) Predict when and where the behavior may occur;
- 3) Identify the possible reasons for that individual's behavior across time and places; and
- 4) Propose interventions that match a “best guess” about why the behavior occurs, leading to resolution of the problem.

FAB is a tool for identifying and describing better intervention selections for ALL Michigan students, including students receiving special education services, those with Section 504 plans, those in alternative education programs, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and general education students who receive frequent detentions or suspensions.

FAB can be helpful in four basic situations:

1. An individualized education program (IEP) team can develop a FAB and design interventions in a written behavior plan if a student's behavior interferes with learning.
2. If a student's learning is not progressing toward written IEP goals and objectives and/or behavior problems are impeding a student's progress, a FAB can troubleshoot what is/is not working for the student.
3. A FAB can help get to the root of disagreements between parents and a school district over issues of least restrictive environment, placement, or types of services needed for the student.
4. A FAB is required when the student experiences significant change in educational placements, such as suspension over 10 days or placement in an interim or alternative education setting.



A planned approach to supporting student efforts toward successful academic achievement and self-regulation of behavior, begun when student learning and behavior first become significant problems, can enhance student opportunities for learning and improve student achievement.

Behavior Intervention Plan

A Behavior Intervention Plan is a written, individualized behavior support plan that is based on a functional assessment of a student's behavior. BIPs incorporate PBS to address identified academic and behavior concerns. A BIP is:

- Based on functional assessment;
- Driven by a hypothesis or “best guess”;
- Directed toward skill building and environmental changes;
- Comprehensive, with multiple intervention components; and
- Assessed, not just by the change in the targeted behavior, but by broader quality-of-life issues, such as maintenance across time and generalization across settings.

A BIP can address replacement behavior and reinforcement for independent student work. The BIP can include descriptions of success-assured tasks a student would perform while learning to apply an appropriate behavior and work independently, describe reinforcers for that student with a schedule of reinforcement, determine BIP evaluation criteria, and set review and revision schedules.

The PBS document includes a comprehensive selection of helpful references for developing a FAB and producing a BIP, along with instructions for creating student support teams and conducting team meetings.

Linking Positive Behavior Support to Special Education

It is a reality that some students require school guidance and training to learn appropriate and proper behavior. A major theme of the PBS document is that ALL students can benefit from PBS through plans that guide positive interactions with peers and authority figures. Section 6 of the PBS document focuses specifically on the use of FAB and PBS for students who are referred for or are receiving special education programs and services.



A detailed overview illustrates the implementation of PBS in three main areas of activity involving special education, presented in order of increasing urgency:

- 1) When a student, regardless of age, is referred for special education services;
- 2) In developing an IEP or an individualized family service plan (IFSP) for a student who is eligible for special education programs and services (by including, as appropriate, PBS approaches for challenging behavior); and
- 3) In disciplinary procedures for students receiving special education programs and services (in situations involving disciplinary procedures, FAB and BIP are prescribed by law in certain specified circumstances).

Supporting the Prereferral and Referral Processes

For prereferral or referral activities, PBS is a discretionary “promising practice.” Positive support, implemented as a discretionary, proactive activity, can provide useful information at any point in decision-making processes for students with identified or suspected disabilities. A special education referral is usually initiated when a student’s problem behavior persists, often frustrating school staff and parents. Many schools have collaborative teamwork procedures for staff and parents to implement at the initial onset of behavior and/or academic problems. For such teams, FAB and PBS are optional, efficient tools for systematically collecting the information needed to address critical questions such as:

- Is an appropriate general education curriculum and program of instruction being provided?
- Is the behavior related to an academic learning problem?
- Is individualized general education behavior support being provided and consistently attempted?

Most alternatives to challenging behavior can best be taught through consistent use of general school and classroom practices. General considerations include:

- Is the provided support effective?
- In a program with many factors, which factors influence (or do not influence) the student’s behavior?
- What is needed to fit PBS into typical general education environments and routines?
- Is the challenging behavior the result of factors unrelated to a disability, such as irregular attendance or, perhaps, cultural or bilingual concerns?

Challenging behavior that is underscored by a disability, however, presents a considerable hurdle when implementing discipline procedures.



Special Education Evaluation and Eligibility

When a student has a disability, special education law requires that challenging behaviors be treated appropriately for the identified disability. If behavior challenges are triggered by conditions related to physical, cognitive, or emotional impairments, a referral for special education services may be appropriate. Once a comprehensive individualized evaluation is completed, providing reliable and evaluative information, an IEP team can make informed decisions about determining eligibility for special education programs and services. In determining special education eligibility, the IEP team report must document considerations about the student's present level of educational performance and other related issues.

The IEP team may conclude that the student does not meet special education eligibility requirements and that the student's needs can be met without special education. Information collected for the evaluation can then be used to continue, develop, or revise a plan of positive support for use in general education. This plan can be implemented generally and/or under the legal provisions of Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. If the IEP team determines that the student has a disability and needs support that can only be provided by special education, information collected for the referral can then be used to develop an IEP.

Functional Assessment of Behavior and Behavior Intervention Plans Help Guide the IEP Team

IDEA '97 specifies several special considerations that every IEP team must examine when writing an IEP. In every IEP team meeting, the IEP team must consider whether the student's behavior significantly impedes the learning of the student or that of others. If behavior is a significant concern, the team must develop strategies that include positive behavior interventions and support, as appropriate.

While FABs or BIPs do not need to be included in an IEP, a strong, well-written BIP is vital to IEP development. The IEP can address behavior concerns by referring to the BIP, or by using information from the FAB and/or BIP in one or more of the following required components of the IEP:

- Present level of educational performance (PLEP)—A required part of every IEP is a statement about the student's PLEP. Including behavioral information in the PLEP statement is one way to address behavior in the IEP. Assessment information collected can help to identify behavior patterns and, subsequently, appropriate annual goals and short-term



objectives. Achievement of these goals and short-term objectives can be supported with supplementary aids and services or special education programs or services.

- **Supplementary aids and services**—These are defined by law. Supplementary aids and services that help to implement PBS (e.g., FAB, BIP, social interaction supports, self-management aids) can be provided through either general education or special education.
- **Related services and programs**—Behavior planning can be considered a related special education service if facilitated by special education-related service personnel, special education classroom program staff, and other special education personnel who are involved in the behavior components of the IEP.
- **Goals and objectives**—If concerns about behavior warrant a FAB and/or BIP, then it is logical to include the anticipated results for the student in at least one annual goal with associated short-term objectives.

Required Use of FAB, BIP, and Manifestation Determination Review

IDEA '97 stipulates that, when schools implement disciplinary procedures in serious cases involving special education students, they must take a student's disability(ies) into consideration. Issues included in the PBS document relate directly to the IEP, FAB, BIP, and manifestation determination review. The PBS document does not provide a comprehensive list of all procedural safeguards for removing a student with disabilities from school. A complete listing of all current procedural safeguards is available through the Michigan Department of Education or local and intermediate school districts.

Even though IEPs and BIPs are in place, a student receiving special education programs and services may still violate school rules and be subject to disciplinary action. In general, the IEP team must consider the need to review a FAB and BIP when a student is removed from school for more than 10 consecutive days or when a series of shorter removals accumulates to more than 10 school days in one school year.

Manifestation Determination Review

In more serious disciplinary procedures, a manifestation determination review is required, during which the IEP team must address the question, "Was the behavior under review related to the disability?" According to federal regulations, it can be determined that the behavior was not a manifestation of the



disability only if the IEP team first considers—in terms of the behavior subject to disciplinary action—all relevant information (i.e., evaluation and diagnostic results, observation of the student, and the student’s IEP and placement). Then the IEP team determines whether the IEP and placement were appropriate and consistently addressed and whether the student’s disability did not impair his/her ability to control and understand the consequences of a behavior.

While not required in all cases, a previously existing BIP, featuring systematic data collection about behaviors, may provide the student performance data needed to address these issues. Data from a previous behavior plan, for example, can support the determination that the student previously understood and controlled the problem behavior under similar circumstances and that the disability or IEP did not create an obstacle to appropriate behavior. If the IEP team decides that the behavior is not related to the disability or IEP/BIP, the student is subject to the same disciplinary procedures as are students without disabilities. Services to the student do not cease, however. If the problem behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the disability, disciplinary procedures are terminated and the student’s IEP is revised to address the problem behavior.

Change of Placement

“Change of placement” is the key to understanding procedural safeguards in disciplinary procedures for students with disabilities. With few exceptions, whenever there is a change in the educational placement of a student with a disability(ies), there must be a new IEP team meeting to develop an IEP for the new setting. Removing the student from school may constitute a change of placement, depending upon the length and frequency of the removal(s). General change of placement, change in placement involving drugs and dangerous weapons, and change in placement in other dangerous situations are explained in detail in the PBS document.

Designing Positive Behavior Support Strategies

PBS strategies can be applied to any behavior that impedes learning, and the application of such strategies should not be limited to overt, acting-out behavior. Improved academic performance is as much a goal of PBS as is reduction of inappropriate behavior. In this light, adjustments in curriculum and instruction are critical aspects of PBS. The PBS document clearly outlines specific conditions related to curriculum and instruction, preventive and early intervention strategies, conditions related to physical and mental health disorders, and considerations of maintenance over time and generalization across settings. It is critically important to keep in mind that the application of PBS is **not** limited to special education-eligible students. In fact, the principles of PBS,



involving functional assessment of learning and behavior that is linked to intervention, are applicable and appropriate for ALL students, regardless of educational status or age. Additional topics comprehensively illustrated in the PBS document include the specific needs of students with Section 504 plans and sociocultural considerations regarding culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Responding to Emergency Situations

Across communities, schools are among the safest places for children. However, although incidents of school violence decreased in the 1990s, recent tragic, highly publicized incidents have understandably left students and school staff feeling less safe. The reality of life in schools is that student behaviors sometimes culminate in infrequent but violent/dangerous situations. Emergencies can occur that require immediate staff response to a real threat of physical harm to people or to the environment. The *Revised School Code of 1976* states that schools must “provide for the safety and welfare of pupils at school or at a school sponsored activity or while en route from school or a school sponsored activity” [*Michigan Compiled Laws* 380.11a(3)(b)]. Therefore, a solid foundation of rules, rule training, rule enforcement, consideration of antecedent events, consistent use of consequences, and a structured schedule with learned routines should be established to avoid emergency situations to the maximum extent possible.

The PBS document provides a selection of promising practice considerations to help Michigan school/districts develop such procedures and achieve compliance with Michigan’s *Statewide School Safety Information Policy* issued on October 4, 1999.

Conclusion

Genuine positive behavior occurs only when quality of life improves for everyone—especially for the student. Even when dangerous, destructive, or disruptive behaviors are reduced or eliminated, the work of parents and practitioners is unfinished unless the student gains satisfying, productive insights into his or her own values, beliefs, talents, and capabilities. PBS implies far more than the local mandate or technical application of behavior intervention. Ultimately, Positive Behavior Support implies belief in—and commitment to—meaningful relationships within caring communities. *Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning* is a dynamic tool that can help schools, families, and communities develop strategies and establish systems to improve the quality of life for all involved.



What's Next

The production of *Positive Behavior Support for ALL Michigan Students: Creating Environments That Assure Learning* is only the first step in a well-crafted PBS implementation plan. Next steps for Michigan schools should include:

- Obtaining the PBS document and inviting parents and practitioners to orient themselves to the concept of PBS, the document itself, and the many resources it presents;
- Conducting a self-assessment of a school's or district's readiness to implement PBS and resources needed for implementation;
- Accessing PBS awareness-level training and sustained learning opportunities provided by Michigan's SIP; and
- Networking with the Michigan Positive Behavior Support Initiative for answers to questions and guidance as implementation progresses.

The PBS document, its "Assessment Tools on Disk," this executive summary, and information about awareness activities and sustained learning opportunities are available on-line at the Michigan SIP web site:

<http://www.michigansipsig.match.org> and by contacting:

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