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Implementing A Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework System In Seven K-4 Element Aries

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IMPLEMENTING A MULTI-TIERED BEHAVIORAL FRAMEWORK SYSTEM IN SEVEN K-4 ELEMENTARIES

By

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Abstract

IMPLEMENTING A MULTI-TIERED BEHAVIORAL FRAMEWORK SYSTEM IN SEVEN K-4 ELEMENTARIES

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The purpose of this study was to complete a formative check of the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) implementation by gathering elementary teacher and administrator perceptions. These perceptions of implementation are used to inform system-wide action for successful implementation of MTBF. The theoretical framework which guided this study was the Deming Cycle: Plan, Do, Check, Act (Deming, 1950). This framework allowed for the analysis of the project results compared to the expectations. Use of this data enabled the district to more effectively infuse the Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework system into the instructional design and improve school climate. This study examined the implementation of a district Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework system and if there are differences between teacher and administrator perspectives. Building administration and teachers at seven K-4 elementary schools were surveyed to determine their perceptions related to the implementation process. The Multi-tiered Behavioral Framework System Survey consists of seven quantitative questions. Findings indicate that the perceptions of each of the stakeholder groups were positive regarding the success of the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

Since teachers have an integral role in the implementation of systems, it is important to examine teachers' attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and challenges with regard to implementation so that districts can identify the actions and supports necessary for successful implementation and sustainability of an effective system. Teachers' perceptions, attitudes and understanding about structures and implementation are critical in order to address buy-in and fidelity of implementation. Therefore, this researcher examined the perceptions of school based practitioners as part of the Deming (1950) Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle of system improvement.

Increasing instructional time and decreasing problem behaviors is an ongoing priority for administrators, teachers, parents, students and communities. The National Education Goals Report (1995), U.S. Department of Education annual report (2016), and the Phi Delta Kappan (PDK) Poll (2018) indicate a lack of classroom discipline as one the most serious challenges facing public schools. Therefore, a successful educational system will have a successful system of support for increasing appropriate behaviors and decreasing misbehaviors.

One such systems-wide approach to increasing appropriate behavior is the Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework (MTBF) system. MTBF is an organizational framework for discipline based on a compilation of research-validated and effective practices, interventions, and systems change strategies. MTBF is commonly referred to as Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) (Bui, Quirk and Almazan, 2010). PBIS structures a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on

their demonstrated level of need, and addresses the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of behavior problems (PBIS, 2017).

Any district initiative success depends on the classroom implementation. District-level leaders typically set goals, determine district initiatives, and lead district-wide adoption of any new initiative. But, *teachers* are the key professionals in implementing *any* educational systems-wide action. Teachers implement curriculum, monitor student learning progress, and set the expectations for their classroom learning environments. A framework to inform classroom and school-level behavior expectations is the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) (National Education Association, 2014). Within this framework, the teacher sets the stage for success each day in each classroom. As such, teachers' perception of MTBF will significantly impact the success of the program (Gorgueiro, 2008).

The purpose of this study was to complete a formative check of the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) implementation by gathering elementary teacher and administrator perceptions. These perceptions of implementation are used to inform system-wide action for successful implementation of MTBF.

Theoretical Framework

Implementing a district-wide initiative like Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) can be complicated. One tool to keep the leaders' focus simplified is the Deming Cycle: Plan, Do, Check, Act (Deming, 1950). The four components of this cycle are Plan, Do, Check and Act.

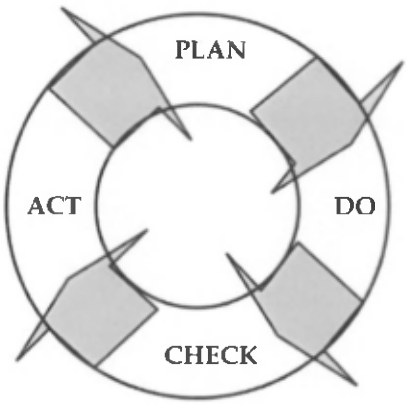

Figure 1: The PDCA Cycle (Kiran, 2016, p. 103)

The first step in the cycle is Plan. The objective in this step is to define a problem and hypothesize possible causes or solutions. Establishing the process and objective are key elements to this first step. Designing the product with appropriate check points is needed to assure expectations and quality requirements are met.

The second step in the cycle is Do. This is the step where the product is made and action is taken. Once the potential solution is identified it is tested on the project. This step in the cycle allows for assessment of the proposed changes and weather they achieve the desired outcomes. Data that is collected is intended to support full implantation which happens later in the cycle.

The third step in the cycle is Check. At this stage, analysis of the project results are compared to the expectations defined in the Do cycle to determine whether the idea has worked or not. Further, the step involves measuring how effective the solution was, and analyzing whether it could be improved in any way. The Check stage of the cycle is comparable to the formative assessments teachers utilize when monitoring student learning and teaching effectiveness. The goal of formative assessment is to monitor

student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning (Eberly Center, 2016). More specifically, formative assessment help students and staff identify their strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning process and target areas that need adjustment. This step is the primary focus of the study. The purpose of this study was to complete a formative check of the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) implementation by gathering elementary teacher and administrator perceptions in order to inform the continuous improvement process.

The fourth and final step in the cycle is the Act. In this step, the improved next steps are implemented by modifying the process or taking corrective actions on significant differences between actual and planned results by analyzing the differences to determine their root causes. The goal is to determine where to apply changes that will include improvement of the process or product. When a pass through these four steps does not result in the need to improve, the scope to which PDCA is applied may be refined to plan and improve with more detail in the next iteration of the cycle, or attention needs to be focused in a different stage of the process.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed:

Question #1: What are the teacher's perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

Question #2: Does the perception of the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system differ based on years of experience?

Question #3: What are the administrators' perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

Question #4: Is there significant difference in perception based upon role in school system?

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used throughout the study:

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA): Is a field of psychology that attempts to identify relationships between the environment in which a particular behavior exists and the cause of an external factor on that behavior rather than an internal process (Johnston, Foxx, Jacobson, Green, & Mulick, 2006).

Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework (MTBF) system: Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework (MTBF) system is an organizational framework for discipline based on a compilation of research-validated and effective practices, interventions, and systems change strategies. Within this system there are a range of interventions that are systematically applied to students based on their demonstrated level of need, and addresses the role of the environment as it applies to development and improvement of behavior problems (PBIS, 2017). The MTBF system utilized a three-tiered, increasingly intensive, systematic approach to meet the behavioral needs of all students in a school.

School Wide Information System (SWIS): The online behavior reporting and monitoring database maintained by the FPS District. It is a reliable, confidential, web-based information system to collect, summarize, and use student behavior data for decision making (Education and Community Supports, 2017). It is used

by building teams to review their data and make selection, integration, and implementation decisions. The SWIS aligns with a MTBF system and provides the needed data for both universal screening as well as progress monitoring.

School Wide – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS): Describes a systematic approach to established strategies to redesign a school environment to support individuals in reducing problem behaviors whereby teachers modify environments and teaching socially acceptable skills and behaviors (Sugai et al., 2000)

Assumptions

The conclusions formulated from the study are dependent upon the following assumptions:

1. The survey responses are truthful in their account and represent their own perceptions.
2. Sufficient time had passed since implemented of the MTBF system to ensure informed responses.
3. MTBF system is an effective framework for behavioral management in schools.

Limitations and Delimitations

Only one district will be included in this study. Therefore, the results are not generalizable to all other school districts. However, the research is a starting point for other urban school districts to gain a better understanding of the implementation process of a MTBF system and what factors need to be considered during the roll out. This study is a snapshot of one point in time. It is a one-time assessment rather than over time. Moreover, the study assesses only the Tier 1 implementation of MTBF system. The first

Tier is only the initial component. The MTBF system has only been in existence for 3 years. This study will be subject to the weaknesses inherent in survey research.

Significance of the Study

Schools seek to provide a safe and encouraging environment that meets the needs of all students. It is imperative that schools find ways to create consistent and productive areas for all students. Managing disruptive and aggressive behavior is reported to be the most challenging aspect of teaching according to teachers and administrators (Christensen, Young, & Marchant, 2004). The MTBF system as a framework is a trusted tool that has been shown to help provide a positive learning environment for student success (National Education Association, 2014). The data collected in this evaluation will be used to inform the implementation of MTBF in the research district. Additionally, the lessons learned from MTBF implementation will inform future improvement initiatives. The research may help other school districts in the implementation process of a MTBF system. In continuous improvement, exploring the perceptions of those implementing large-scale change may have implications for efficient and effective practices.

Organization of the Study

A review of literature is presented in Chapter Two. The review provides some literature on student behavior problems schools face, a history of implementation strategies, a systems approach framework using MTBF systems, how MTBF systems are implemented, the use of effective staff development, and the importance of district leadership. In Chapter Three, the researcher discusses the use of the Developmental Evaluation as the study design. The researcher also identifies the population of the study, selection of the measurement tools, collection of the data, and analysis procedures. In

Chapter Four, the researcher presents the specific research findings for each of the research questions, as well as sub questions posed by the study. Chapter Five will include conclusions and recommendations for future system wide initiatives for the research school district and other school districts working to implement a MTBF system or other school improvement programs.

CHAPTER TWO: Literature Review

Positive student behavior is important in order to ensure a safe and productive learning environment for all students. A school leader's job is to set the condition of a system-wide approach to support positive behavior, such as Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF). The literature will address background information on behavior and discipline, MTBF, systems leadership, professional development and the PDCA cycle for MTBF.

Behavior and Discipline

Misbehavior can disrupt the flow of classroom activities and interfere with learning. Approximately one-half of all classroom time is taken up with activities other than instruction, and discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of this lost instructional time (Cotton, 1990). The number of students engaging in anti-social behavior in public schools has risen dramatically over the past decade. According to Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2004), "as these students get older, they wreak havoc on schools. Their aggressive, disruptive and defiant behavior wastes teaching time, disrupts the learning of all students, threatens safety, overwhelms teachers and ruins their own chances for successful schooling and successful life" (para 1). When selecting behavioral initiatives that will affect all environments and populations of a school, practitioners must consider the relevance, durability, effectiveness and efficiency of a program (Sugai & Horner, 2007).

Research indicates that students in classrooms where the behavior management system is poorly implemented lose instructional time; therefore, academic performance is at risk (Weinstein, 2007). Those students enrolled in poorly managed classes are more likely to experience long-term negative academic, behavioral, and social results than

students in well-managed classrooms (Kokinos, Panayiotou, & Davazoglou, 2005). For many years, teachers designated classroom management to be the most challenging aspect of their profession and the area in which they receive the least amount of training. The most fundamental classroom management practice is to establish a set of classroom rules and expectations with consequences aligned with the infraction (Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2012)

Over the past 20 years, greater attention has been directed toward approaches based on validated practices that apply what we know about the science of human behavior to improve school climate and discipline. Applied behavior analysis (ABA) is the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental modifications to produce socially significant improvement in behavior (Alberto & Troutman, 2012). Individuals' behavior is determined by past and current environment events. ABA demonstrates one person cannot change another, but shaping the environment that they function in can influence that person's behavior. School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SW-PBS)-known also as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a district or school's process for teaching social and behavior skills. In SW-PBS, focus is on changing the behavior of the adults to change the environment that will, in turn, encourage change in student behavior (Fremont Public Schools, 2015).

Carney and Stiefel (2008) conducted a study that concluded school personnel have had the responsibility of identifying, learning, and implementing interventions that meet individual needs of students who have been at-risk for academic failure. Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) identified classroom teachers as being the most accountable for student success. Yero (2002) emphasized teacher participation as the most important

aspect to student success. The classroom teacher's work load according to Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) has become complex and much has been expected of them. If teachers have an impact on changing the conditions surrounding the classroom, they can impact change in the classroom (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Change has been produced when classroom conditions have provided every child the same level of attention for an equal learning opportunity (Graham, 2009). Teachers have collaborated to meet student's need, which has been credited for changing classroom conditions (Hardman & Dawson, 2008). A specifically designed core curriculum, grouping, or levels based on student's individual abilities were described as changes teachers have made to accentuate student's learning in the classrooms (Allington & Walmsley, 2007).

One attempt at increasing student learning that is gaining in popularity across the country is the implementation of school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports (SW-PBIS). SW-PBIS is an organizational framework for discipline. As a framework or approach, it is not a specific model or program, but a compilation of effective practices, interventions, and systems change strategies. Focusing on a systems change approach along with validated behavior change techniques, SW-PBS is designed to meet the unique behavioral needs of each school and every student (Fremont Public Schools, 2015).

Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework

MTBF is an organizational framework for discipline based on a compilation of research-validated and effective practices, interventions, and systems change strategies. MTBF is commonly referred to as School Wide - Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (SW-PBIS). SW-PBIS is a prevention oriented, systems based approach

supported by theoretically sound practice (Sugai & Horner, 2006). SW-PBIS is a three-tiered, increasingly intensive, systematic approach to meet the behavioral needs of all students in a school. At the school level, the focus is on the establishment and implementation with fidelity of this framework across all three tiers. Development and decision making is driven by data to ensure on-going contextual appropriateness for the school and is dependent upon strong home-school collaboration while reinforcing appropriate behaviors through explicit social skills instruction (Warren, Bohanson, Edmonson, et al., 2006)

In SW-PBIS, school based teams are provided with training on 1) systems change and leadership principles and practices, and 2) application of research based instructional and management principles and practices for schoolwide, non-classroom, classroom and individual student levels (Fremont Public Schools, 2015).

Essential framework components are vital to the success of the systems approach and are based on the SW-PBIS National Center Implementer's Blueprint. These components include: 1) Common Philosophy and Purpose, 2) Leadership, 3) Clarifying Expected Behavior, 4) Teaching Expected Behavior, 5) Encouraging Expected Behavior, 6) Discouraging Inappropriate Behavior, 7) Ongoing Monitoring, and 8) Effective Classroom Practices (Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, 2010).

Outcomes, data, practices, and systems are the four elements that guide the systematic implementation of SW-PBS. Clearly defined outcomes with the selection of effective practices, use of meaningful data, and attention to systems together lead to successful outcomes. These four features are also interrelated; they interact with and guide each other (Fremont Public Schools, 2015).

The SW-PBS approach emphasizes sustained use of effective behavioral practices from a systems perspective (Greenwood, Delquadri, & Bulgren, 1993; Lathan, 1988). A systems perspective focuses on the collective actions of individuals within the school and how they contribute to the way the school, as a whole operates. Leaders, or change agents, need to understand how the system works and deal with the many factors that come into play when change is made in a complex system. The most basic concept of a systems approach is, no one element exists by its' self but each element always relates to the other components of the system. Thus, if one element is altered, the relationships between it and the other factors are affected (Cromwell, Ronald, & Scileppi, 1995).

When considering SW-PBS implementation leaders need to complete a systems analysis by mapping all elements and their interrelationships within the system. There are many elements that influence the learning and behavior of children in school. These include, but are not limited to, the attributes of the individual child, the qualities of the classroom, the factors of the school itself, the interface between the school and the community, and the forces operating at the level of the state and national educational system (Cromwell, Ronald, & Scileppi, 1995).

Therefore, because SW-PBS is a systems approach, the entire system in which it exists need to be considered. Effective change is based on the understanding that the educational system is a complex system. There is extensive research examining the effect of a single factor on learning. There is far less research assessing the contextual relationship or pattern of factors embedded in more complex, school wide framework implementation, such as SW-PBS.

Evidence Based Practice

School-wide PBIS is an evidenced based practice and its implementation is related to improved academic and social behavior. Administrator leadership is essential for successful implementation of SW-PBIS. Effective leadership in SW-PBIS includes clarity of vision, building capacity, team building, data for effective decision-making and avoiding competing and conflicting initiatives (Horner, 2014). Schools that are more receptive to a SWPBS model and have more success in establishing staff participation, have leadership that emphasizes (a) an overall "success for all" approach for all students rather than just for those students who the fit the school's approach, (b) a data-based problem-solving approach, and (c) an outcome-based approach to improve graduation rates and reduce dropout rates. Administrative support is vital to a SW-PBS team's buy-in, roll out, and sustainability (Flannery & Sugai, 2009).

Effective school wide discipline will succeed or fail by the vision, commitment, and amount of personal attention received from the administrator. Clearly, schools with good outcomes have forceful leadership at the administrator level, but with staff members' views clearly represented in decisions. Therefore, leadership includes a team. Members of this team should include individuals whose roles, responsibilities, and activities are associated with the (a) prevention of the development and occurrence of problem behavior, (b) development and maintenance of behavior, and (c) management and evaluation of resources related to the provision of behavioral supports. Examples of district-wide team members include district administration, school administration, curriculum, special education, school psychology and counseling, student health, and data or information management (PBIS, 2017).

A leadership team is needed to lead the assessment and action planning process. The team will lead their staff through a process of developing and gaining consensus on beliefs, expectations, and procedures, along with the completion of a written plan. This full staff involvement in the process is crucial, and effective leadership utilizes effective and efficient group processes to engage staff, understand change and the stages of implementation, and provide effective professional development. Additional objectives of the team are to increase capacity in four primary areas: training capacity, coaching capacity, evaluation capacity and coordinating capacity (PBIS, 2017).

Once procedures are developed, effective leadership ensures that the SW-PBIS plan is continually evolving and arranges for routine review and renewal through data gathering, policy revision, and training of new staff. Practices are upheld through supervision of staff, and practices are incorporated into hiring and evaluation processes. Strong leadership is the factor that contributes most directly and assuredly to effective change in schools, particularly when change involves new practices that must be incorporated into everyday routines (Colvin, Kame'enui & Sugai, 1993; Sprick, Wise, Markum, Haykin, & Howard, 2005)

System Wide Implementation

Implementation is "a specified set of activities designed to put into practice an activity or program of known dimensions" (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005, p.5). "Systems refer to the structures and supports district and school leadership teams provide to enhance teachers' implementation of evidence-based practices with fidelity" (Freeman et al., 2017, p. 1). To enhance outcomes school and district leadership teams should select and implement systems based on data documenting specific needs

within their district and schools. Implementation should be coordinated within a positive, preventive, and school- wide MTBF (Freeman, et al., 2017).

School-wide PBIS is currently implemented with local adaptations in over 1,500 schools in 23 states. Horner, Freeman, Nelson, and Sugai (2017) report, schools implementing SW-PBIS with fidelity report 20-60% reductions in office discipline referrals, improved student satisfaction, improved faculty/staff satisfaction, and improved administrator perceptions of school safety. Preliminary results also indicate that effective behavioral systems melded with effective instruction are likely to result in improved academic gains (Horner et al., 2017).

School-wide PBIS has been implemented primarily at the school level. The goal has been to emphasize that behavior support in schools needs to focus on school-wide systems that emphasize prevention not just on active design of individualized interventions. The documented value of investing in school- wide behavioral systems has improved. Now states and districts throughout the country have initiated planning to determine how SW-PBIS can be implemented across large numbers of schools within a state/district (Horner et al., 2017).

The National Technical Assistance Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) has proposed a blueprint for large-scale implementation of SW-PBIS. This blueprint recommends the following four components for successful implementation: (a) a Leadership Team to actively coordinate implementation efforts; (b) an organizational umbrella composed of adequate funding, broad visibility, and consistent political support; (c) a foundation for sustained and broad-scale implementation established through a cadre of individuals who can provide coaching

support for local implementation, a small group of individuals who can train teams on the practices and processes of SW-PBIS, and a system for on-going evaluation; and (d) a small group of demonstration schools that documents the viability of the approach within the local fiscal, political and social climate of the state/district (Sugai, 2002).

Looking at implementation more closely, several key elements need to occur for the educational system to support SW-PBIS implementation. First, foundational school-wide systems are in place for all staff to enable successful implementation. This includes SW-PBS implementation is a clear school and district priority, resources are available to support implementation, and it aligned and integrated with other district priorities and initiatives. Second, all staffs know what they are implementing and if they are doing it accurately. Lastly, data indicates that staff members are implementing it effectively (Freeman et al., 2017).

In summary, SW-PBIS is being implemented in an increasing number of schools throughout the nation. A program that when implemented with fidelity results in improved student learning, behavior and success. As school districts begin designing more extensive implementation plans, care should be taken to identify the key information sources used to guide and evaluate large-scale implementation efforts.

Staff development. Implementation of SW-PBIS involves ongoing training and professional development. Training of the SW-PBIS components are multifaceted with inclusion of various school stakeholders; state administration, district leaders, school staff, students, and parents. The initial SW-PBIS implementation is guided through readiness activities as outlined in PBIS Implementation Blueprint (Lewis et. al., 2016). The SW-PBIS Implementation Blueprint provides training guidelines for state

administration and district leaders to support school staff, students and parents in the successful establishment and sustainability of SW-PBIS.

Majority of staff development fail to consider two factors. This is, what motivates teachers to engage in staff development, and the process by which change in teachers typically takes place. Leaders and leadership teams must consider change is a slow, difficult, gradual process; teachers need to receive regular feedback on student learning outcomes; and continued support and follow-up are necessary after initial training (Lewis et al., 2016). A team approach, administrator participation, skill development and performance feedback are system components needed to support staff behavior.

Once a foundation for SW-PBIS has been established, school staff provides ongoing opportunities for capacity building of multi-tiered behavior and reward system. Training opportunities can include, but limited to, yearly professional development for current and new staff members, quarterly assemblies for students' training and informational sessions offered to parents (Lewis et al., 2016).

The organization and operations of schools present challenges in establishing and maintaining staff participation around school-wide initiatives. First, these challenges include organizational and staff expectations concerning discipline and teaching prosocial skills and the emphasis on academic performance. In addition, in middle and high schools departmental structures tend to decentralize the administrative structure and require more time to gain buy-in within each department as well as each grade level (Newman et al., 2000; Bohanon et al., 2009).

Model process for teacher change. Several initiatives are promoting a profound shift in teacher education towards more reform oriented practices. Despite the fact that

professional development programs differ greatly in their context, there are several key characteristics that have been identified as crucial to improve their success. Loucks-Horsley et al (1998) present seven principles for effective professional development experiences. This framework emphasizes the continuous and circular design permeating the implementation of professional development programs. This design is infused by the continuous reflection based on the outcomes of the program to reevaluate and further improve it. The principles of effective professional development include:

1. Well defined image of effective classroom learning and teaching
2. Provide opportunities for teachers to build their knowledge and skills
3. Use or model with teachers the strategies they will use with their students
4. Building a learning community
5. Support teachers to serve in leadership roles
6. Provide links to other parts of the education system
7. Continuously assessing themselves and making improvements (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1998).

School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

The development of the structures and systems for staff participation must be given priority and dedicated time and attention when initiating SW-PBIS. Staff participation requires (a) a school leadership team with the representation, responsibility, and authority to organize and coordinate behavior support interventions, and (b) agreement by the majority (>80%) of the staff to the development and implementation of a school-wide plan to improve the social culture of the school (Sugai & Horner, 2009). Without these components, implementation of SW-PBS will not succeed or sustain (McIntosh, Sugai & Horner, 2009).

Staff participation is a critical component of successful SW-PBS implementation, and the orientation of school staff to SW-PBS can be important in increasing this

participation. The initial step in this process, and one of the most important factors, is gaining of administrative support (Sugai & Horner, 2009). Administrative staff need to actively support the implementation process including being visible, modeling the behavior, sharing the data, acknowledging the staff participation, participating in SW-PBS meetings, recognizing SW-PBS as an organizational structure, and securing and maintaining funding.

An appropriate introduction will begin to build momentum towards buy-in, which is required for effective SW-PBS implementation. The goal of the effort is to have the staff see SW-PBIS as not just another initiative, but an umbrella under which many previously implemented activities/initiatives fit. Gaining staff buy-in can be accomplished in several ways, however, first information and data must be gathered, the information then communicated to staff, and implementation information presented. The goal of the initial introduction is to develop awareness of the importance of a positive behavioral climate in improving the achievement of all students in school, not just those perceived to be interested and ready for learning (Sugai & Horner, 2009).

Once the core principles of SW-PBIS and the rationale for its implementation in the high school have been presented, the next step is to maximize staff participation by securing buy-in from at least 80% of the staff. Then, the leadership team can develop and conduct professional development and training activities that include (a) rationale for a preventive approach, (b) applications of SW-PBIS practices in contextually and developmental ways, (c) using data for decision making, (d) development of definitions and procedures for common problem behaviors (Sugai & Horner, 2009).

Once SW-PBIS plan has been implemented, the maintenance of ongoing staff participation and buy-in is vital for achieving desired student school outcomes and ensuring implementation integrity and sustainability. Strategies for achieving this goal include:

- Regular, ongoing faculty updates during whole staff and departmental meetings
- Data sharing with the faculty on discipline practices using relevant information in a simple graphical format
- Personal stories sharing on the impact of SWPBS with students and staff members
- Recognition and acknowledgements for staff and team participation (e.g., teaching expectations, rewards) from administrative leaders and students (e.g., recognition slips)
- Teacher-friendly multi-modal materials (e.g., DVD lesson plans, positive behavior referrals, activity schedules) (Sugai & Horner, 2009).

All staff members, including support staff, need continual professional development in the basics of SW-PBIS implementation and systems change. Included in these trainings are the effective use of acknowledgements, instructional strategies and their relationship to problem behavior, self-management interventions, and de-escalation techniques. In addition, all staff members should have basic understanding of data collection, summarization, analysis, and reporting procedures, including an overview of the functions or purposes of problem behavior (Sugai & Horner, 2009). Professional development must be ongoing throughout the school year, and be supportive of the SW-PBIS team and the school-wide initiative.

Leadership

Successful implementation of organizational change requires strong leadership at all levels to sustain the necessary energy to achieve a new vision and direction throughout a system (Conzemius & O'Neill, 2001). Good leaders first establish learning organization built on trust and commitment and then move their people through change by being optimistic, creative, and leading with passion (Cash, 1997). Effective leaders go beyond declaring intent: they must turn aspirations into actions, they are impatient and driven by urgency and they recognize that the ultimate test for a leader is results (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). For instructional leaders to rally the staff toward improvement, they must encourage problem solving and deeper thinking skills and develop teachers as engaged learner to mobilize toward sustainable change (Fullan, 2002). Essential components for effective leaders include: pursuit of moral purpose, understanding of the change process, relationship building, fostering knowledge building and striving for coherence (Fullan, 2001). Transformation happens when leaders communicate by utilizing passion, integrity, authenticity, and collaboration (Scott, 2002). Leadership creates the vital link between organizational effectiveness and people's performance by encouraging employees to work better and to improve their commitment and satisfaction (Jing & Avery, 2008).

A principal must provide the instructional leadership that is transformational to the overall success of students and teachers alike. The role of the building administrator in no longer "an inspector of teacher competence," but is now a "facilitator of growth" (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 374). It is a standard component of a job description for a building administrator to develop the instructional capacity in the teachers that will create a school culture of educational responsibility. According to McKevitt and Braaksma (2008) a supportive administrator is a critical condition and an essential component for

successful implementation. To further enable staff buy-in and support, leadership teams must anticipate barriers to the successful implementation process. The building administrator must represent the commitment to the PBIS efforts by actively being involved in all aspects of the SW-PBIS model and embodying the strategies in daily professional activities, such as interacting with students and staff members. Additionally, the SW-PBIS model can reflect school improvement plans established that sometimes present a well-written but failed plan of action. The recommendation to commit to the school improvement goals is another recommendation by Horner et al. (2005). Furthermore, a written commitment to improve the overall academic level requires an outline for an improvement to the climate of the school, and the SW-PBIS model will serve as a vehicle of the improvement process.

Cushing, Horner, and Barrier (2003) found that a part of school climate is the framework of how students and teachers relate to each other, that is, the student social climate, and this is defined as the social rules that direct the prompting, rewarding, or extinction of student behavior. Principals and school leaders hold the ability to drive support or not in terms of a school-wide initiative. The creation of staff buy-in and support for the SW-PBIS team lies solely with the administrator. Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004), in agreement with the creators of PBIS, identified administrative support as a critical element to the success of SW-PBIS and any other school enterprise. Administrators are the main instrument in choosing a leadership team that can function effectively as SW-PBIS coaches and drive the focus on specific goals (Sadler & Sugai, 2009). In addition to the principal, the SW-PBIS leadership team is solely responsible for the coordination of the implementation process (Blonigen et al.,

2005). Sadler and Sugai (2009) indicate the ability of principals to support an effective implementation of SW-PBIS can be significant. By participating in leadership team meetings, truly possessing buy-in for the program itself, and promoting data-based decision processes in their administrative duties they are delivering a message of support and providing a behavior model for the staff to observe and follow. Providing materials and resources for guidance in the development of a behavioral intervention curriculum will guarantee effective instructional practices and continued, sustained implementation (Sadler & Sugai, 2009).

PDCA Cycle and Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework Locally

In 2014, Fremont Public Schools (FPS) requested funding through the United States Department of Education for a School Climate Transformation Grant (SCTG) and received official notification of the grant award in September of 2014. The goal of the grant was to enhance FPS systems of support seeking to improve behavioral outcomes and learning conditions for all students through the implementation of a Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework (MTBF) system. This project is intended to enable FPS to implement a MTBF system more effectively and improve school climate across seven K-4 elementary within FPS.

School Wide-Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS), a MTBF system, strives to prevent disruptive and other unacceptable behavior and promote a positive school culture. Through ongoing monitoring, evaluation and new interventions, school officials are hopeful that placing such an emphasis on student behavior has an overall positive effect on student achievement (Bradshaw, Debnam, Koth, & Leaf, 2009).

Prior to implementation of the MTBF system, all FPS schools were selecting and implementing their own behavioral program strategies. However, there was a lack of a systematic approach to truly support behavioral systems on a consistent basis. Administrators and teachers expressed the need and desire to provide a climate of prevention as opposed to an environment of punishment/consequences. The implementation of a MTBF system was identified as the foundation of a district-wide process that supports students, teachers, staff, and parents.

The needs assessment involved reviewing the baseline Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) which illustrated differences in quality and quantity of data. Clear patterns of behavior could not be established or evaluated because the processes being used were not systemic. The review illustrated the need for a common data platform. The grant allowed the schools to use School Wide Information System (SWIS) as a common data system.

A MTBF system needed to be implemented with fidelity to have the elements necessary to build positive learning environments that support data driven decision-making and data driven instruction. School leaders felt FPS had a high likelihood of system change and improvement due to extensive experience managing and evaluating district initiatives. FPS identified three key predictors of likelihood of change and improvement: (1) level of interest and support from school and district administrators, (2) a program that when implemented with fidelity results in improved student learning, behavior and success, and (3) a high level of teacher and staff support with job embedded, ongoing, PD and on-site behavior coaches.

Fremont's MTBF system implemented SW-PBIS within all k-4 elementary schools of the district. This includes 7 elementary schools over five years. This provides the opportunity to study a consistently applied SW-PBIS system across multiple buildings (Rumberger & Lim, 2008).

The MTBF system provided curriculum and support for all students to increase emotional resilience and reduce negative behaviors to improve school culture and academic support. It combined the MTBF system with targeted interventions for identified students. Central to the program is the understanding that behavioral skills are learned and must be taught.

The 2014-2015 school year was a planning and training year. In the fall of 2014 behavioral coaches for the district were identified. Following intensive training, these coaches, along with school administrators, collaborated with staff from the state's MTBF project to identify school MTBF teams. The coordinated team-based training began in early 2015 to develop systemic school-based systems. The behavioral coaches are part of each school-wide MTBF team. K-4 site teams were created and active for the 2015-2016 year. Teams were comprised of a building principal, district coach, special education staff, classroom teacher and classified staff. Site teams (with support from the coaches) led the implementation of the MTBF system at the K-4 schools.

In the first 48 months of being awarded a five year School Climate Transformation Grant, Fremont Public Schools has made impressive progress towards meeting and exceeding the district and federal program goals. These goals have been measured by evaluating regular and consistent data through summative and formative evaluations. However, it is difficult to understand the ramifications of changes when

implementing innovative projects, such as the MTBF system, within in a complex system of a school district. This exploratory study will assist in determining if there are differences between teacher and administrator perspectives of the implementation process.

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to complete a formative check of the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) implementation by gathering elementary teacher and administrator perceptions in order to inform the continuous improvement process.

Design

This study examined the implementation of a district Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework system and if there are differences between teacher and administrator perspectives. The study's dependent variables are the teacher and administrator results of the Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework System Survey. The Multi-tiered Behavioral Framework System Survey consists of seven quantitative questions and one open-ended question.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to complete a formative check of the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) implementation by gathering elementary teacher and administrator perceptions in order to inform the continuous improvement process. Within the study, the following questions were analyzed:

1. What are the teachers perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?
2. Does the perception of the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system differ based on years of experience?
3. What are the administrator's perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

4. Is there significant difference in perception based upon role in school system?

Participants

Individuals participating in this study were elementary teachers in a Midwestern, suburban school district who participated in the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system and the administrators leading the implementation during the 2016-2017 school year. Study participants ($N = 92$) consists of two naturally formed groups. Group 1 includes a naturally formed group of elementary teachers in the research district ($n = 85$). Group 2 includes a naturally formed group of administrators overseeing the framework implementation in the research district ($n = 7$). The implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system occurred district-wide at the elementary level in 2016-2017. Thus, all elementary teachers and administrators overseeing the framework implementation were invited to participate in the study. None were excluded.

Data Collection

All participant data is collected from the survey including grade level taught (kindergarten through 4th grade), number of total years of teaching experience (0-4 years, 5-9 years, 10-14 years, or 15 or more years), and response to seven Likert Scale questions and one open-ended question. No other identifying information was gathered. The surveys were administered as part of the regular feedback and improvement process of the district. Permission for use of requested data was approved through appropriate school district protocol and procedures for research and request of data use.

The survey questions were developed by a group of educational leaders that included university faculty, research district SW-PBIS Coaches, and research district

Central Office Administrative team. The questions were generated by the previously described group at several small group meetings. The questionnaire was administered to the elementary faculty and building administrators. The survey questionnaire was designed to receive information in the following areas: (1) perception regarding the success of the program for improving student behavior and learning, (2) professional training, (3) implementation timeline (4) amount of utilization of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system, and (5) adequacy of process guidance for implementation. In the questionnaire, the study included information regarding grade level and years of experience to give a clearer picture of the whole implementation program.

The questions regarding perceived success of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system were used to measure both engagement in and perception of the worth of the program.

The questions regarding professional development refer to the adequacy of both initial and ongoing professional development as the implementation of the program develops. The implementation timeline questions refer to the sequence of activities and events that helped the district assure that the launch of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was successful. The questions regarding the utilization of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system in the classroom will clarify if the program was implemented building-wide by all teachers and if there were differences of the rate of implementation as it equates to teaching experience. The questions regarding adequacy of process guidance for implementation were used to give the district a perception of how well the

multi-tiered behavioral framework system was designed and implemented to serve all students.

Description of Procedures

The research was conducted district-wide at the elementary level. The study procedures did not interfere in any way with the normal educational practice and did not involve coercion or discomfort of any kind. Staff are accustomed to providing feedback. Data was stored on secure databases. No individual identifiers were attached to the data.

Staff completed the survey in the spring of 2017 after one year of implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system. All elementary teachers and administrators overseeing the framework implementation received the survey via Google Forms using district email. Participants had 1.5 weeks to complete the survey.

Data Analysis

Question 1 will be displayed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts of questions 1 -7 on the survey to state the elementary teacher perceptions of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system. Question 2 will be analyzed using Chi Square Test of Independence to measure if the elementary teacher perceptions vary by years of experience (0-4 years of experience, 5-9 years, 10-15 years and 16 and over years). Question 3 will be displayed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts of questions 1-7 on the survey to state the administrator's perceptions of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system. Question 4 will be analyzed using Chi Square Test of Independence to measure if the administrators and elementary teacher perceptions vary by years of experience.

CHAPTER FOUR: Results

The purpose of this study was to complete a formative check of the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework (MTBF) implementation by gathering elementary teacher and administrator perceptions in order to inform the continuous improvement process.

Research Questions

1. What are the teachers perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?
2. Does the perception of the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system differ based on years of experience?
3. What are the administrator's perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?
4. Is there significant difference in perception based upon role in school system?

Research questions 1 and 2 are about the elementary teacher perceptions. Tables 1 and 2 describe the elementary teacher group composition.

Table 1: Elementary Teachers' Years of Experience

	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15 or more years
$N = 85$	$n = 21$	$n = 14$	$n = 18$	$n = 32$

Table 2: Elementary Teachers' Grade Level Taught

	KG	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th grade
N = 85	*n* = 20	*n* = 16	*n* = 20	*n* = 13	*n* = 16

Research Question 1

What are the teachers perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system? Question one was analyzed by reviewing descriptive statistics of survey results as displayed in Table 3.

Table 3: Elementary Teacher's Perceptions Regarding the Implementation of the Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework System

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Do you believe the multi-tiered behavioral framework system improved student behavior?	*n*=12	*n*=60	*n*=13	*n*=0	*n* = 85
Do you believe that teachers have had enough professional training to make the multi-tiered behavioral framework system work?	*n*=24	*n*=57	*n*=4	*n*=0	*n* = 85

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Do you believe that the multi-tiered behavioral framework system is being utilized on a daily basis?	*n*=25	*n*=56	*n* =4	*n* =0	*n* = 85
Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was done in a reasonable time frame?	*n* =13	*n* =70	*n* =2	*n* =0	*n* = 85
Do you believe that more learning is taking place due to the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?	*n* =13	*n* =58	*n* =13	*n* =1	*n* = 85
Do you believe that students are more engaged in their own learning because of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?	*n* =7	*n* =62	*n* =16	*n* =0	*n* = 85
Would you recommend that other school districts utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?	*n* =12	*n* =64	*n* =9	*n* =0	*n* = 85

Teacher's responses were overwhelming positive with only one response being noted as "strongly disagree." There are, however, observations to be made from the review of Likert answers. The majority of the responses were in the "strongly agree" and "agree" areas. The district can capitalize on these areas in the future by assuring adequate time and timeliness of professional trainings Interesting, the three survey questions that elicited the highest percentage of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses were: "Do you feel that you had enough professional training to make the multi-tiered behavioral framework system work?", "Do you utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system on a daily bases?" and "Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework was done in reasonable time frame?". These results suggest that teachers felt there was adequate training provided. Teachers also overwhelming reported that they used the new system daily.

Research Question 2

Does the perception of the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system differ based on years of experience? Question two was analyzed using a series of chi square calculations. Teachers self-reported their years of experience in one of four years of service categories. For each survey question, chi-square was calculated to determine if years of experience influence the answer categories for the survey question. In other words, the null hypothesis is that the variables are independent. As seen in tables 4 through 10, none of the relationships are statistically significant. There is no survey question in which years of experience influences the answer to the survey question.

Table 4: Teacher Response by Years of Experience Survey Question 1

Do you believe the multi-tiered behavioral framework system improved student behavior?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
0-4 years	4	12	5	0	21
5-9 years	2	9	3	0	14
10-14 years	4	13	1	0	18
15 or more years	2	26	4	0	32
Total	12	60	13	0	85

$\chi^2 = 6.36$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 9$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question one was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 4 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (9, $N = 85$) = 6.36, $p \leq .05$).

Table 5: Teacher Response by Years of Experience Survey Question 2

Do you feel that you had enough professional training to make the multi-tiered behavioral framework system work?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
0-4 years	7	14	0	0	21
5-9 years	4	8	2	0	14
10-14 years	4	12	2	0	18
15 or more years	9	23	0	0	32
Total	24	57	4	0	85

$\chi^2 = 7.54$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 9$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question two was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 5 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (9, $N = 85$) = 7.54, $p \leq .05$).

Table 6: *Teacher Response by Years of Experience Survey Question 3*

Do you utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system on a daily basis?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
0-4 years	7	13	1	0	21
5-9 years	4	8	2	0	14
10-14 years	7	10	1	0	18
15 or more years	7	25	0	0	32
Total	25	56	4	0	85

$\chi^2 = 6.78$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 9$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question three was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 6 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (9, $N = 85$) = 6.78, $p \leq .05$).

Table 7: *Teacher Response by Years of Experience Survey Question 4*

Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was done in a reasonable time frame?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
0-4 years	3	17	1	0	21
5-9 years	4	10	0	0	14
10-14 years	2	16	0	0	18
15 or more years	4	27	1	0	32
Total	13	70	2	0	85

$\chi^2 = 3.67$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 9$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question four was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 7 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (9, $N = 85$) = 3.67, $p \leq .05$).

Table 8: *Teacher Response by Years of Experience Survey Question 5*

Do you believe that more learning is taking place due to the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
0-4 years	5	13	3	0	21
5-9 years	4	7	3	0	14
10-14 years	1	14	2	1	18
15 or more years	3	24	5	0	32
Total	13	58	13	1	85

$\chi^2 = 6.29$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 9$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question four was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 8 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (9, $N = 85$) = 6.29, $p \leq .05$).

Table 9: Teacher Response by Years of Experience Survey Question 6

Do you believe that students are more engaged in their own learning because of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
0-4 years	3	13	5	0	21
5-9 years	2	11	1	0	14
10-14 years	1	12	5	0	18
15 or more years	1	26	5	0	32
Total	7	62	16	0	85

$\chi^2 = 5.77$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 9$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question six was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 9 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (9, $N = 85$) = 5.77, $p \leq .05$).

Table 10: Teacher Response by Years of Experience Survey Question 7

Would you recommend that other school districts utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
0-4 years	3	15	3	0	21
5-9 years	4	9	1	0	14
10-14 years	2	14	2	0	18
15 or more years	3	26	3	0	32
Total	3	26	3	0	85

$\chi^2 = 3.61$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 9$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question seven was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 10 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (9, $N = 85$) = 3.61, $p \leq .05$).

Research question 3 is about the elementary administrator perceptions. Table 11 describes the elementary administrator group composition.

Table 11: Elementary Building Administrator Years of Administrative Experience

	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15 or more years
$N = 7$	$n = 2$	$n = 3$	$n = 2$	$n = 0$

Research Question 3

What are the administrator's perceptions regarding the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system? Question three was analyzed by reviewing descriptive statistics of survey results as displayed in Table 12.

Table 12: Administrator's Perceptions Regarding the Implementation of the Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework System

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Do you believe the multi-tiered behavioral framework system improved student behavior?	n=3	n=4	n=0	n=0	$n = 7$

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Do you believe that teachers have had enough professional training to make the multi-tiered behavioral framework system work?	*n*=0	*n*=6	*n*=1	*n*=0	*n* = 7
Do you believe that the multi-tiered behavioral framework system is being utilized on a daily basis?	*n*=1	*n*=6	*n* =0	*n* =0	*n* = 7
Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was done in a reasonable time frame?	*n* =0	*n* =5	*n* =2	*n* =0	*n* = 7
Do you believe that more learning is taking place due to the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?	*n* =0	*n* =7	*n* =0	*n* =0	*n* = 7
Do you believe that students are more engaged in their own learning because of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?	*n* =0	*n* =7	*n* =0	*n* =0	*n* = 7
Would you recommend that other school	*n* =4	*n* =3	*n* =0	*n* =0	*n* = 7

districts utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

Elementary administrators' responses were overwhelming positive with no responses being noted as "strongly disagree." There are, however, observations to be made from the review of Likert answers. The majority of the responses were in the "agree" category which indicates opportunity of improvement in order to elicit "strongly agree" in the future. Interestingly, when any response had at least one "disagree," it was always matched with zero "strongly agree." This indicates these areas might warrant a closer look than others. The two questions that had zero "strongly agree" with at least one "disagree" were: "Do you believe that teachers have had enough professional training to make the multi-tiered behavioral framework system work?" and "Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was done in a reasonable time frame?" This will be further discussed in chapter 5.

Research Question 4

Is there significant difference in perception based upon role in school system? Question four was analyzed using a series of chi square calculations. For each survey question, chi-square was calculated to determine if difference in role (teacher compared to administrator) influence the answer categories for the survey question. In other words, the null hypothesis is that the variables are independent. As seen in tables 13 through 19, two of the relationships are statistically significant: the survey question 4 "Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was done in a reasonable time frame?" and survey question 7 "Would you recommend that other school districts utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?" This will be discussed further in chapter 5.

Table 13: Teacher and Administrator Response Survey Question 1

Do you believe the multi-tiered behavioral framework system improved student behavior?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Teacher	12	60	13	0	85
Administrator	3	4	0	0	7
Total	15	64	13	15	92

$\chi^2 = 4.75$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 3$.

Difference of teacher and administrator response by years of experience for survey question one was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 13 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (3, $N = 92$) = 4.75, $p \leq .05$).

Table 14: Teacher and Administrator Response Survey Question 2

Do you feel that you had enough professional training to make the multi-tiered behavioral framework system work?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Teacher	24	57	4	0	85
Administrator	0	6	1	0	7
Total	24	63	5	0	92

$\chi^2 = 3.72$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 3$.

Difference of teacher and administrator response by years of experience for survey question two was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 4 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (3, $N = 92$) = 3.72, $p \leq$ .05).

Table 15: Teacher and Administrator Response Survey Question 3

Do you utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system on a daily basis?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Teacher	25	56	4	0	85
Administrator	1	6	0	0	7
Total	26	62	4	0	92

$\chi^2 = 1.71$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 3$.

Difference of teacher response by years of experience for survey question three was tested using chi- Difference of teacher and administrator response by years of experience for survey question one was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 15 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (3, $N = 92$) = 1.71, $p \leq .05$).

Table 16: Teacher and Administrator Response Survey Question 4

Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was done in a reasonable time frame?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Teacher	13	70	2	0	85
Administrator	0	5	2	0	7
Total	13	75	4	0	92

$\chi^2 = 11.10$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 3$.

Difference of teacher and administrator response by years of experience for survey question four was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 16 was statistically significantly different (χ^2 (3, $N = 92$) = 11.10, $p \leq$ .05).

Table 17: Teacher and Administrator Response Survey Question 5

Do you believe that more learning is taking place due to the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Teacher	13	58	13	1	85
Administrator	0	7	0	0	7
Total	13	65	13	1	92

$\chi^2 = 3.48$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 3$.

Difference of teacher and administrator response by years of experience for survey question five was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 17 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (3, $N = 92$) = 3.48, $p \leq .05$).

Table 18: Teacher and Administrator Response Survey Question 6

Do you believe that students are more engaged in their own learning because of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Teacher	7	62	16	0	85
Administrator	0	7	0	0	7
Total	7	69	16	0	92

$\chi^2 = 2.91$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 3$.

Difference of teacher and administrator response by years of experience for survey question six was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 18 was not statistically significantly different (χ^2 (3, $N = 92$) = 2.91, $p \leq .05$).

Table 19: Teacher and Administrator Response Survey Question 7

Would you recommend that other school districts utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Teacher	12	64	9	0	85
Administrator	4	3	0	0	7
Total	16	67	9	0	92

$\chi^2 = 8.48$

$p < .05$ for observed versus expected cell frequencies with $df = 3$.

Difference of teacher and administrator response by years of experience for survey question seven was tested using chi-square test of independence (χ^2). The result of χ^2 displayed in Table 19 was statistically significantly different (χ^2 (3, $N = 92$) = 8.48, $p \leq$ .05).

CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion and Discussion

Over the course of the last several years we have implemented a Multi-Tiered Behavioral Framework system. This work has naturally led to reflection on effectiveness and if we could implement systems more effectively. Effective educational leaders use data to guide decision making, setting and prioritizing goals, and monitoring progress. Educational leaders use data to define needs, set goals, plan interventions, and evaluate progress. The analysis of the gaps between goals for student learning and student's performance defines the actions of effective schools.

Decision making is a regular practice for education administration because a school, like all formal organizations, is basically a decision-making structure (Hoy and Miskel, 2001). Decision making is a process that guides actions. Decisions are based on the beliefs, values and previous experiences of individuals. Leaders must know themselves, why they choose particular paths, know whom to involve, and know which particular decision-making model to use. Today, educational leaders know that top down decisions making is less than effective. They know that a team approach leads to the best chance for success and collaboration results in better decisions.

When making data informed decisions the first decision is to decide what level of involvement is most effective. Leaders have at least four options of involvement in decisions: deciding alone, seeking participation and input, seeking collaboration, and letting others decide. An effective leader uses participative and collaborative strategies for important decisions. The purpose of this survey was to determine the perceptions of the implementation of the Multi-Tiered Behavior Framework system and if it is possible

to improve the process to get better results. The theoretical framework chosen to help focus this study is the Deming Cycle. The four steps in the Deming Cycle are Plan, Do, Check and Act. The Check step in the cycle is whether the idea has worked or not, this step is the primary focus of this study. At this stage, analysis of the projects results are compared to the expectations defined in the Do cycle to determine whether the idea has worked or not. Further, the step involves measuring how effective the test solution was, and analyzing whether it could be improved in any way. The Check stage of the cycle is comparable to the formative assessments teachers utilize when monitoring student learning and teaching effectiveness. The goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessment help students and staff identify their strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning process and target areas that need adjustment.

Educators must understand the concepts in processing professional development and what it means to education. The National Staff Development Council (2007) created a set of nine standards that all professional development should follow. They include content knowledge and quality teaching, research-basis, collaboration, diverse learning needs, student learning environments, family involvement, evaluation, data-driven design, and teacher learning.

Professional development refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. According to Glattenhorn (1987), by gaining increased experience in one's teaching role they systematically gain increased experience in their professional growth through examination of their teaching ability. Professional workshops and other

formally related meetings are a part of the professional development experience (Ganzer, 2000). Much broader in scope than career development, professional development is defined as a growth that occurs through the professional cycle of a teacher (Glattenhorn, 1987). Moreover, professional development and other organized in-service programs are designed to foster the growth of teachers that can be used for their further development (Crowther et al, 2000). One must examine the content of those experiences through which the process will occur and how it will take place (Ganzer, 2000; Guskey, 2000).

This perspective, in a way, is new to teaching in that professional development and in-service training simply consisted of workshops or short term courses that offered teachers new information on specific aspects of their work (Brookfield, 2005). Champion (2003) conceived that regular opportunities and experiences for professional development over the past few years had yielded systematic growth and development in the teaching profession.

Many have referred to this dramatic shift as a new image or a new module of teacher education for professional development (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001: Walling & Lewis, 2000). In the past 15 years there have been standards-based movements for reform (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 1993; Hord, 2004; Kedzior & Fifield, 2004: Sparks, 2002). The key component of this reform effort has been that effective professional development has created a knowledge base that has helped to transform and restructure quality schools (Guskey, 1995; Willis, 2000).

Much of the available research on professional development involves its relationship to student achievement. Researchers differ on the degree of this relationship. Variables are the school, teacher, student level related to the level of learning within the

classroom, parent and community involvement, instructional strategies, classroom management, curriculum design, student background knowledge, and student motivation (Marzano, 2003). Based upon a review of several studies, Marzano (2003) concluded that the professional development activities experienced by teachers have a similar impact on student achievement to those of the aforementioned variables.

Opportunities for active learning, content knowledge, and the overall coherence of staff development are the top three characteristics of professional development. Opportunities for active learning and content specific strategies for staff development refer to a focus on teacher application of learned material. Overall coherence refers to the staff development program perceived as an integrated whole and development activities building upon each other in a consecutive fashion. Marzano (2003) warned, however, that standardized staff development activities which do not allow for effective application would be ineffective in changing teacher behavior.

Richardson, (2003) published a list of characteristics associated with effective professional development, stating that such programs would optimally be:

"statewide, long term with follow-up; encourage collegiality; foster agreement among participants on goals and visions; have a supportive administration; have access to adequate funds for materials, outside speakers, substitute teachers, and so on; encourage and develop agreement among participants; acknowledge participants existing beliefs and practices; and make use of outside facilitator/staff developers." (p. 402)

Kedzior and Fifield (2004) described effective professional development as a prolonged facet of classroom instruction that is integrated, logical and on-going and

incorporates experiences that are consistent with teachers' goals; aligned with standards, assessments, other reform initiatives, and beset by the best research evidence. Elmore (2002) described professional development as sustained focus over time that is consistent with best practice.

Effective professional development enables educators to develop the knowledge and skills they need to address students' learning challenges. To be effective, professional development requires thoughtful planning followed by careful implementation with feedback to ensure it responds to educators' learning needs. Educators who participate in professional development then must put their new knowledge and skills to work. Professional development is not effective unless it causes teachers to improve their instruction or causes administrators to become better school leaders.

The data collected from this exploratory study revealed that the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was a successful initiative. The stakeholders surveyed, teachers and building administrators, collectively perceived that the implementation process was very efficient and benefited from strong buy in and support from both groups. The key components for successful implementation include collaboration and buy-in with teachers and administrators and adequate and timely staff development. The completion of this study provides the district with many significant findings.

Teacher Perceptions

- Overall the teachers believed that the multi-tiered behavioral framework was good for student learning and therefore utilized it on a daily basis.

- The teachers felt that the professional development was adequate and implemented on a manageable time line.
- A majority of the teachers believed that MTBF implementation helped create an environment where more learning was taking place and that students were more engaged in their own learning.
- There was no significant difference in the perception of the success of the implementation of the MTBF system based on years of experience.

Teachers have worked hard at the MTBF implementation and results show that timeliness and quality of the professional development were successful and effective. Teachers also reported that the value of the MTBF positively impacts the engagement and learning outcomes for students. Teachers reported that the district provided the necessary support, training, and time to work collaboratively, which has been identified as keys to ensure district-wide implementation success (Whipp, Wexler-Eckman & van den Keiboom, 2005).

Administrator Perceptions

- Overall the administrators believed that the multi-tiered behavioral framework was good for student learning and observed it being utilized it on a daily basis.
- The administrators felt that the professional development was adequate and implemented on a manageable time line.
- A majority of the administrators believed that MTBF implementation helped create an environment where more learning was taking place and that students were more engaged in their own learning.

- There was no significant difference in the perception of the success of the implementation of the MTBF system based on years of experience.

Differing Perceptions between Administrator and Teacher

- Teachers and Administrators response by years of experience were significantly different for survey question 4 – "Do you believe the implementation of the multi-tiered behavioral framework system was done in a reasonable time frame?". Awareness of the difference in perception suggest that communication needs to be increased to outline the rational for the frequency and intensity of training.
- Teachers and Administrators response by years of experience were significantly different for survey question 7 – "Would you recommend that other school districts utilize the multi-tiered behavioral framework system?". Each of the administrators either "strongly agree" or "agree" that they would recommend that other district's utilize MTBF but 9 teachers "disagreed" in recommending other districts utilize MTBF. It may be possible that one of Loucks-Horsley et all (1998) seven principles for effective professional development experiences was not successfully achieved. The district will need to review their strategies for implementing the principles of effective professional development including:

1. Well defined image of effective classroom learning and teaching
2. Provide opportunities for teachers to build their knowledge and skills
3. Use or model with teachers the strategies they will use with their students
4. Building a learning community
5. Support teachers to serve in leadership roles
6. Provide links to other parts of the education system
7. Continuously assessing themselves and making improvements (Loucks-Horsley et al., 1998).

Conclusion

The primary function of district leadership is to 1) ensure that a common-language, common-understanding exists around the rationale for and the purpose and expected outcomes of implementation, 2) clearly identify who has the responsibility for what and how those individuals will be held accountable, 3) ensure that district policies are supportive of, and not barriers to, the implementation of the model, 4) provide sufficient support (professional development, technical assistance) to ensure that the implementation plan and timelines can be achieved and 5) identify clearly the district- and school-level leaders who will have implementation expectations as part of the professional development. This study focused on these points in an effort to provide more meaning and effective training in the future.

For professional development to be truly effective administration as well as certified teaching staff need to be involved from planning to implementation. System change involves the lives of everyone in the system undergoing change. A MTBF cannot be implemented successfully using a top down method. It is critical that all stakeholders are involved from the beginning to help contribute to and inform the development, implementation, and evaluation of the MTBF process.

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