# Guiding Principles in Providing Quality Education for All Students

For several years, educators have been encouraged by the significant gains demonstrated by some schools and districts (www.pbis.org). Unfortunately, these success stories are often limited in scope, short term in duration, and small in numbers. More troubling, these gains are not demonstrated in a meaningful manner and scale where the need is greatest, that is, in neighborhoods and cities disadvantaged by poverty, gang violence, unemployment, and substance abuse. Although we have a few "pockets" of excellence, an overwhelming number of schools and districts show chronic and mediocre rates of academic achievement and social behavior competence.

In this chapter, we emphasize and describe *nine* critical guiding principles that can increase the impact, durability, and spread of the implementation of our best evidence-based practices with the 7-step process.

1. Secure active and integrated participation and support from all levels of stakeholders.

2. Ensure that the school principal is an effective instructional leader and an active participant in all implementation.

3. Develop systems to ensure all students have access to the best instructional and behavioral practices for school success.

4. Implement instructional and behavior practices and systems concurrently within a multitiered support continuum.

5. Implement support systems with fidelity to ensure sustainability.

6. Use positive reinforcement judiciously.

7. Manage data effectively and efficiently.

8. Utilize a building leadership team-based approach.

9. Consider context and culture when implementing procedural details.

Guiding Principle One
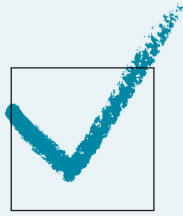
Secure Active and Integrated Participation and Support From All Levels of Stakeholders

Without question, education systems are complex and multilayered organizations involving many different stakeholders. Effective and relevant implementation at the school level requires that key and influential stakeholders be actively involved, committed, visible, and represented. Everyone from the highest level of government to individuals working directly with the students must be actively and systematically involved.

In general, these stakeholders shape policy, serve as advocates, assist in problem solving and decision making, provide material and knowledge resources, participate in practice implementation, model expected behavior and practices, disseminate information, enhance public visibility, and hold implementers accountable. Specifically, stakeholders at the neighborhood, county, state, and national levels include family members, neighbors, business owners, law enforcement, community advocates, politicians, higher education faculty, social welfare, and medical professionals. More specifically, at the school level, stakeholders include students, support staff (e.g., paraprofessionals, office, cafeteria, bus, custodial, security), and family members.

At the national level, former President Obama, in signing the My Brother's Keeper initiative (2014), made the following appeal:

> That this challenge encourages communities (cities, rural municipalities, and tribal nations) to implement a coherent cradle-to-college-and-career strategy for improving the life outcomes of all young people to ensure that they can reach their full potential, regardless of who they are, where they come from, or the circumstances into which they are born.

Similarly, then Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Attorney General Eric Holder (2011) announced the launch of the Supportive School Discipline Initiative:

> "By teaming up with stakeholders on this issue and through the work of our offices throughout the Department, we hope to promote strategies that will engage students in learning and keep them safe," said Secretary Duncan.

State departments can and must play a leadership role in guiding and supporting schools and involved agencies. Again, positive exemplars abound showing how the state departments have accomplished this goal. For example, the West Virginia Department of Education (2002) has developed and implemented policies for establishing "Expected Behavior in Safe and Supportive Schools" (Policy 4373). Specifically, this state department focused on developing partnerships declaring that:

> School systems cannot provide all of the resources and intervention services that may be required to meet the more severe behavioral needs of students or to address high need concerns within a specific community. For this reason, partnerships with other agencies and organizations are essential in order to coordinate a seamless delivery of necessary services and support to implement this policy. The WVDE shall establish state agency and organization partnerships that enhance the policy development, supports and resources to shape behaviors in safe and supportive schools. These partnerships may be both formal and informal.

An encouraging recent sign has been the recognition by schools and districts that maximizing student outcomes requires full cooperation and participation of all stakeholders and must be emphasized in school policies and procedures. For example, the purpose statement for the School Behavior Management Plan at Buncombe Community High School, North Carolina (2014–2015), begins:

> Acceptable behavior is a vital and necessary part of every student's school life. It requires the cooperation of parents, teachers, administrators, and students.

To reiterate, successfully educating all students requires active recruitment, systematic involvement, and opportunities for meaningful participation of all stakeholders, who represent every level of government (federal, state, and local), school boards, service agencies, school districts, schools (administrators, teachers, support staff, and students), and communities (families, businesses, local government). Securing stakeholder participation, although challenging, is attainable and critical to the effective, durable, and relevant implementation of schoolwide behavior plans.

Guiding Principle Two
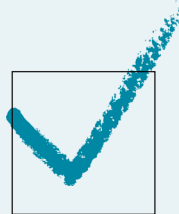
Ensure That School Principal Is an Effective Instructional Leader and Active Participant in All Implementation

Without an effective school leader, successful schoolwide implementation of any practice or policy is likely to be limited and not long lasting, and teachers are limited in what they can accomplish with their students (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; Sugai, O'Keeffe, Horner, & Lewis, 2012). Implementation success is affected by the degree of agreement or conflict between the school principal and leadership in the district office, on the school board, or from the state department. Implementation is further influenced by (a) frequency with which policy focus and direction change, (b) degree of emphasis on evidence-based practices, and (c) philosophical or theoretical perspective of new leadership.

Although major policy and initiative decisions are made at the district and state levels, support for and translation of these decisions into action occurs at the school level and under the guidance of the school principal. Current research summaries reinforce the importance of the school principal:

1. Effective school principals are competent instructional leaders.

2. Successful and sustained implementation of schoolwide turnaround efforts requires 4–6 years with a consistent school principal who is a competent instructional leader.

3. Effective school principals serve as the "funnel" for effectively and efficiently prioritizing and translating district, state, and federal policy into relevant and culturally/contextually appropriate practices at the classroom and school levels.

4. Effective school principals influence student outcomes by focusing on (a) schoolwide factors (e.g., discipline, climate, organizational routines); (b) design and implementation of classroom instructional routines, curriculum, and behavior management; and (c) establishment and sustainability of highly competent teaching staff (academic and behavioral).

5. Effective school principals continuously and actively model expected practices and professional behaviors.

6. Effective school principals are regular and active participants in school leadership teams that are addressing schoolwide high priorities.

7. Effective school leaders ensure that all students have equitable access to a full continuum of academic and behavioral supports that overtly values and addresses diversity related to disability, race, ethnicity, language, gender, culture, etc.

<div align="right">
(Bellamy, Fulmer, Murphy, & Muth, 2007;
Louis, Dretzke, & Wahlstrom, 2010;
Richter, Lewis, & Hagar, 2012; Sugai,
O'Keeffe, Horner, & Lewis, 2012)
</div>

These leadership characteristics have direct bearing on the development and implementation of proactive schoolwide discipline plans. The school principal must (a) be an active participant on the school behavior leadership team, (b) establish and maintain behavior as a high schoolwide priority, (c) model the practices expected of staff members and students (e.g., data-based decision making, social skill practices, and accountability), (d) provide targeted and intensive supervisory support for nonparticipating staff members, and (e) align district and state policies and requirements with school and classroom priorities.

Guiding Principle Three
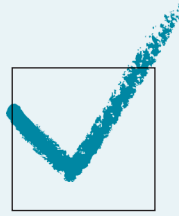
Develop Systems to Ensure All Students Have Access to the Best Instructional and Behavioral Practices for School Success

Few would argue at a philosophical or even a political level that all children have a civil right to an effective education. As a result, we have heard supporting statements, such as "All children can learn," "We are bound to provide quality education for all children," or "All children can succeed. No excuses, no exceptions." Similarly, we recall that the ambitious No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 authorized extensive federal funding and guidelines to support K–12 education to ensure that all students learn to a satisfactory standard. In December of 2015, former President Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (2015) that replaced NCLB and reauthorized the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Like NCLB, ESSA provides governance for the United States K–12 public education policy and continues a focus on "all students."

Unfortunately, these well-intentioned efforts have not improved outcomes in a great number of schools for so many of our students. For example, results from the 2015 Programme for International Student Achievement (PISA) report indicate that the United States ranking remains in the middle of 35 countries, basically unchanged from 2006 rankings (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development [OECD], 2015). In addition, results from decades of research have shown that students of color, from low SES, and with disabilities are disproportionately subjected to significantly high rates of school suspension practices (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; McIntosh, Girvan, Horner, Smolkowski, & Sugai, 2014; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2013). This long-standing disproportional treatment has several deleterious education outcomes for these disadvantaged students. For example, at the national level, Black (69%) and Hispanic/Latino (73%) students graduate at much lower rates than their white peers (86%) (Governing, the States and Localities, 2012). Similarly, school dropout rates are disproportionately higher for students of color (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002).

Another serious concern has been the racial and ethnic overrepresentation in special education (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2013). Moreover, a disturbing national trend indicates that growing numbers of students with behavioral issues are channeled from the schools into the juvenile and justice systems. In effect, we have been sustaining a fast track to prison for many of our students (Aljazeera, America, January 23, 2014; Gonzalez, 2012).
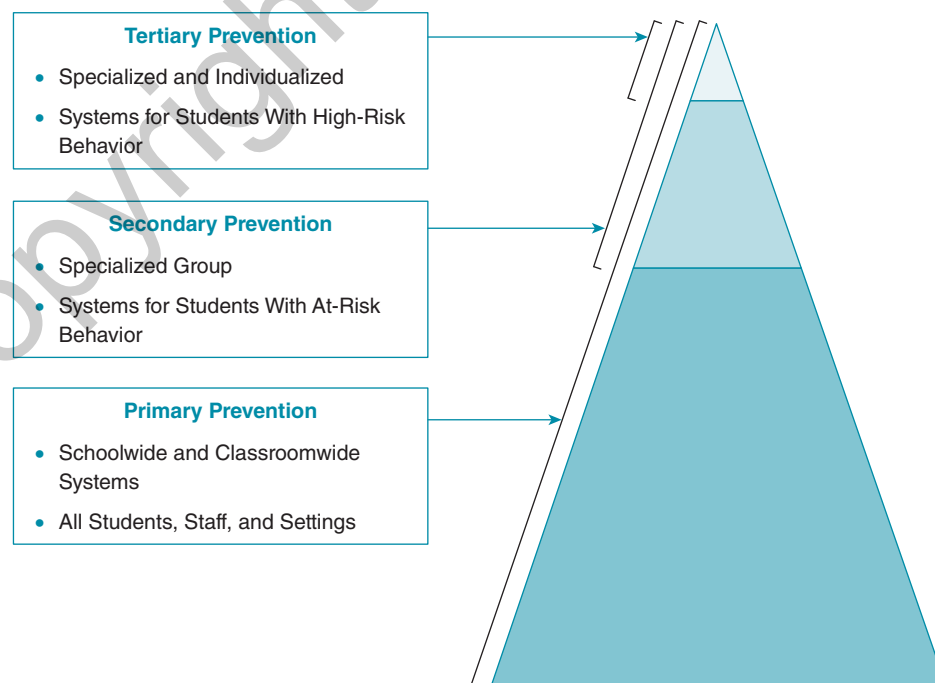
In general, despite a documented set of effective instructional and behavioral practices, large numbers of nonwhite ethnic groups and students with disabilities are

failing in our schools. A clear need exists to adopt school models that are designed to ensure that *all students* will succeed in our schools regardless of ethnicity or disability. The emphasis must be on the systems that are in place for the delivery and implementation of effective practices, that is, giving educators opportunities to implement with fidelity and sustainability.

Fortunately, comprehensive and effective models designed to serve all students are already operating in some schools and districts. For example, a successful approach or framework developed and extensively implemented by PBIS is depicted in Figure 1.1. A key element is the development and implementation of a continuum ("triangle") of academic and behavior support for all students and the addition of more intensive supports for students who are at high risk of failure and/or are unresponsive to general or universal programming. Adopting the public health prevention logic, PBIS invests in a continuum of practices and systems that are selected and implemented so that all students have maximum opportunity to experience success. At tier 1 (universal), the goal is to ensure that most students (~80%) are academically and behaviorally successful across all staff, settings, and time. At tier 2 (targeted), additional group-based practices are added for those students who require additional supports to benefit (~15%). At tier 3 (intensive), students whose behaviors are at most risk and/or are unresponsive to tier 1/2 practices and systems are provided specialized individualized supports (~5%).

In Section II of this book, we address the first of these levels—*Universal Prevention*. The assumption is that if this level of intervention is firmly in place, targeted and intensive levels of intervention are more likely to be implemented successfully.

FIGURE 1.1   Continuum of Schoolwide Instructional and Positive Behavior Support

Tertiary Prevention

- Specialized and Individualized
- Systems for Students With High-Risk Behavior

Secondary Prevention

- Specialized Group
- Systems for Students With At-Risk Behavior

Primary Prevention

- Schoolwide and Classroomwide Systems
- All Students, Staff, and Settings

SOURCE: www.pbis.org, OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Guiding Principle Four
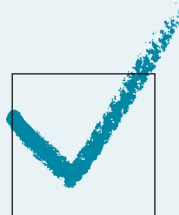
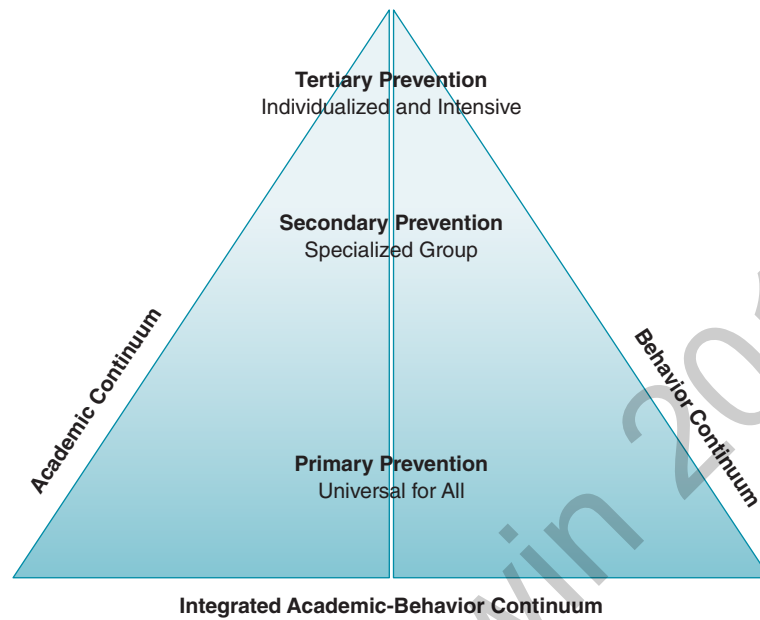*Implement Instructional and Behavior Practices and Systems Concurrently Within Multitiered Support Continuum*

Results from a growing body of research indicate a direct relationship between academic performance and problem behavior in schools (Algozzine, Wang, & Violette, 2011; Freeman et al., 2015; Hagan-Burke et al., 2011; McIntosh, Chard, Boland, & Horner, 2006; McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Dickey, & Braun, 2008; Read & Lampron, 2012; Wang & Algozzine, 2011). If teachers are spending considerable time in managing student behavior in the classroom, less time is available for engaging these students (and others in the class) with instruction and learning (Barriga et al., 2002; Nelson, Jolivette, Leone, & Mathur, 2010). Similarly, chronic problem behavior exhibited by students in schools usually leads to suspensions and expulsions, which, of course, disrupt the delivery of instruction to these students, resulting in lower academic achievement for them (Christle, Nelson, & Jolivette, 2004; Skiba & Sprague, 2008). Other studies have shown that problem behavior is predictive of lower academic performance and, conversely, that low academic performance is predictive of behavioral problems (Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006; McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Dickey, & Braun, 2008; Tobin & Sugai, 1999).

For all students to succeed in school, we need to systematically address this well-documented reciprocal relationship between academic performance and problem behavior. In effect, we need to implement effective systems that simultaneously address *both* academic and behavioral needs for all students (Sadler & Sugai, 2009; Tracy, 2013).

Just as a continuum of support is needed for students with behavioral concerns, the same processes are being used on an increasing basis to provide a continuum of support for students with academic problems. In special education, Response to Intervention (RtI) has evolved as a model using tiered practices in which the instruction delivered to students varies in systematic ways to ensure that the nature of the students' learning difficulties is effectively addressed (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006; Gersten et al., 2009; Kame'enui, 2007; Tracy, 2013). More recently, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) has become the umbrella for the application of integrated practices and systems that are organized in a continuum for all students (Tier 1) but with increasing specialized and intensive supports for groups of students who are unresponsive and/or present high risk for failure (Simonsen et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2009; Sugai, Simonsen, Freeman, & La Salle, 2016). The integration of behavior support and school mental health also reflects an MTSS approach (Stephan, Sugai, Lever, & Connors, 2015).

Given the close relationship in schools between academic performance and problem behavior, several researchers have reported that more efficient and effective

Tertiary Prevention
Individualized and Intensive

Secondary Prevention
Specialized Group

Academic Continuum

Behavior Continuum

Primary Prevention
Universal for All

Integrated Academic-Behavior Continuum

results are obtained when tiered delivered systems for instructional and behavioral support are implemented *in conjunction with each other* (Putnam, Horner, & Algozzine, 2006; Sadler & Sugai, 2009). A model for this dual intervention is presented in Figure 1.2, Integration of Academic and Social Behavior Three-Tiered Continuum of Support. The model shows two parallel continua where students are grouped according to their respective academic and/or behavioral needs. While the focus of this book is whole-school or universal interventions for behavioral support, we strongly recommend that the other tiers for *both* academic and social behavior be systematically planned for and implemented.

Guiding Principle Five
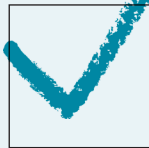
Implement Support Systems With Fidelity to Ensure Sustainability

In Guiding Principle One, we emphasized the importance for all school stakeholders, at every level, to commit to and become actively involved in adopting, implementing, and supporting schoolwide evidence-based programs for success to be obtained for

all students. However, this success is not possible if commitments and systems are not in place to support implementation of effective program(s) with *high fidelity over time*. Fidelity of implementation refers to the systematic measurement of the extent to which an adopted program, practice, or initiative is implemented according to the purpose and guidelines initially designed by developers and researchers (Collier-Meek, Fallon, Sanetti, & Maggin, 2013; Hagermoser Sanetti & Kratochwill, 2009).

Achieving and maintaining high levels of implementation fidelity are important for two main reasons. First, by ensuring the implementation is accurate and efficient, achievement of the expected outcomes is increased. In an extensive review of research on fidelity of implementation, it was concluded that levels of implementation significantly affected program outcomes (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Stockard, 2013a; Stockard, 2013b; Swanson, Wanzek, Haring, Ciullo, & McCulley, 2013). In one particularly important study, schools that met 80% of the implementation guidelines for their PBIS schoolwide implementation had greater academic gains than those who did not meet criteria (Horner, Sugai, Eber, & Lewandowski, 2004).

Secondly, fidelity of implementation results is needed to guide decisions related to maintaining, adapting, or discontinuing use of a given practice or program. Looking at student performance alone is insufficient for making decisions about student responsiveness. For example, a student's low performance could be associated with an ineffective practice, poor implementation of an effective practice, and/or misalignment between an effective practice and the learning goals and needs of the student. Only when implementation fidelity is high and practice and student alignment is appropriate can valid decisions be made about student progress.

Unfortunately, a substantial body of research indicates that many programs are implemented with low levels of fidelity of implementation to begin with (U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Mihalic, 2004), and others begin with relatively high levels but implementation fidelity decreases over time, in some cases in relatively short times (Gerstener & Finney, 2013; Martens & McIntyre, 2009; McIntyre, Gresham, DiGennaro, & Reed, 2007).

Several identified factors have been associated with lower levels of implementation fidelity. Strategies proven to be effective in controlling these factors and ensuring high levels of program implementation are described in Chapter 9, where we focus on sustaining effective implementation over time and changing conditions (Step 7: Sustaining the Plan for the Long Haul). Thus, as a critical cornerstone, stakeholders must make a firm commitment to actions and systems that support the adoptions and establishment of high fidelity implementation of proven programs *for the long haul*.

Guiding Principle Six
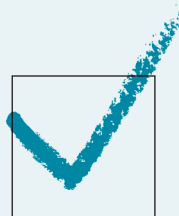
Use Positive Reinforcement Judiciously

Another cornerstone for developing a proactive discipline plan is the effective use of positive reinforcement. When teaching academic skills, teachers provide positive feedback, recognition, and acknowledgment (e.g., grades, points, praise, and certificates) when students answer accurately in response to opportunities to develop their academic skills and behaviors (e.g., "Well done, Tamika, yes, democracy is a system of government by the people."). They know that this practice is important to firming up learning, building fluency, and maintaining skills over time. When teachers see students making academic errors, they provide corrective feedback (e.g., "Almost, Jorge; you used the correct formula for calculating the hypotenuse of a triangle, but remember it only works when determining the length of the side opposite a right angle.") and at the first opportunities give positive feedback when the corrected response is displayed (e.g., "That's it, you used the formula with that triangle because it had a right angle and not with the other one that did not.").

Our position on the use of positive reinforcement is clear. When judiciously applied, positive reinforcement is not only a desirable practice for academic learning; it is an equally essential component for effective instruction of social behavior learning. As such, positive reinforcement is absolutely critical for developing social behaviors at the individual, whole classroom, and school levels. The academic application of positive reinforcement to social behavior is exactly the same. During initial social skill acquisition, positive feedback is frequent and informative (e.g., "You got it, Adrian! Always stop and check yourself when you see one of your friends being teased."). If social behavior errors occur, corrections are given and opportunities to reinforce appropriate responses are positively reinforced (e.g., "Remember, Ranin, when you raise your hand to get my attention, please wait quietly.").

In this book, we extend positive reinforcement from individual student to development and implementation of effective, proactive, schoolwide discipline plans. Positive reinforcement is presented as a key step in Chapter 5 for teaching the school's behavior expectations. Similarly, in Chapter 6, and especially in Chapter 9, positive reinforcement plans are described for maintaining expected behavior once it is established. Finally, positive reinforcement is presented in Chapter 7 as a critical tool for correcting problem behavior. In effect, we strongly recommend practices that involve the careful and systematic application of positive reinforcement as a primary cornerstone of this book.

We also acknowledge that despite a preponderance of supporting empirical evidence of the effectiveness of using positive reinforcement practices and systems (e.g., token economies, point recognition plans, reward systems, and verbal praise), to cultivate and maintain quality student behavior, some individuals suggest that the use of positive reinforcement can have negative effects on student learning, motivation, and growth (Kohn, 1993a; Kohn, 1993b; Pink, 2012). We find that this position is based on differences in theoretical perspective (e.g., humanism vs. behaviorism); inappropriate procedural use of positive reinforcement (e.g., "If you do that again, I'm taking your points away," "How can I give you a praise when you behave so poorly?"); or developmentally and culturally inappropriate applications (e.g., "Everyone look at how well Haru has managed his anger."). Any effective program can be misused or incorrectly understood.

Since these positions and interpretations can cause division among staff and present barriers to full implementation, we suggest that school teams and leadership (a) adopt a defendable and documented theoretical perspective (e.g., behaviorism)

and understand its essential features, (b) align the use of positive reinforcement with cultural and contextual features of the implementation environment, (c) monitor implementation fidelity to ensure accurate and appropriate use, and (d) continually collect data on observable direct and indirect effects on student behavior.

Finally, we are proponents of the use of positive reinforcement and its supporting empirical evidence. However, if staff members are unclear, skeptical, or oppositional, then time must be allocated to reach some level of agreement in the initial start-up step of implementation: Chapter 3: Step 1, Getting Started. Failure to obtain understanding and agreement may result in inconsistent levels of implementation throughout the school, leading to mediocre or negative outcomes and may cause divisions among staff.

Guiding Principle Seven

Manage Data Effectively and Efficiently
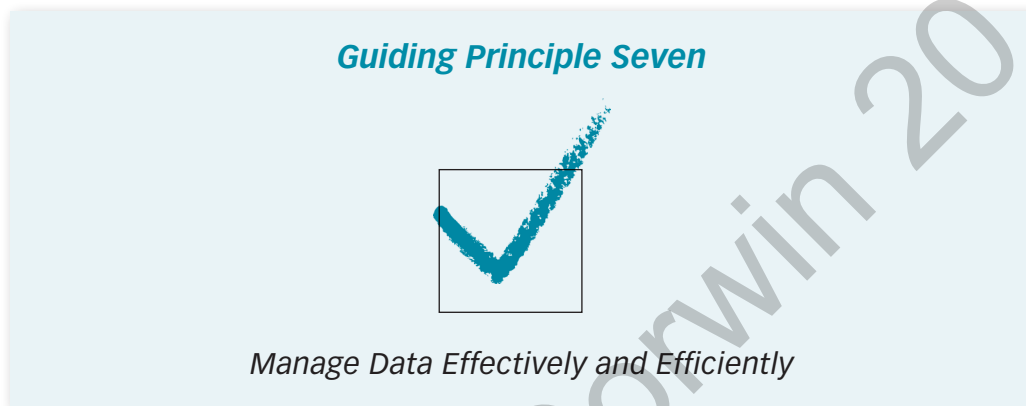
One of the more encouraging trends in public schools in recent years has been greater involvement in and commitment to the collection and usage of data. Data are used to assess student academic and social behavior, select and evaluate programs, assess implementation fidelity, make decisions for resolving issues, and planning for the future (Blanc et al., 2010; Bradshaw, Waasdorp, & Leaf, 2012; Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, & Sugai, 2007; Halverson, 2010).

However, some critical issues need to be systematically addressed in the way data collection and analysis are administered for this resource to become a more widely used cornerstone in significantly impacting student achievement and social behavior. Three major concerns must be addressed: (a) understanding the purpose of data collection, (b) having timely and efficient access to useful data displays, and (c) establishing accessible expertise to use the data.

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE OF DATA COLLECTION

While it is encouraging that so many schools and districts are collecting data, the concern is that the activity does not go much beyond data collection—that is, why are data being collected? As Slotnik and Orland (2010) noted, we have become "Data rich and information poor." A common concern among educators is that they are required to gather large amounts of data that do not directly serve them. That is, data are collected and submitted to state and federal departments or to the district office, and that is the extent of their use (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, 2011).

In other cases, schools are expected to use this large database to distill information related to generic questions or "big ideas" related to learning that have little application to academic instruction, behavior supports, or school climate. While some gains can be made through post hoc analysis, we would argue that effective and meaningful data use is unlikely and inefficient, and can become so cumbersome that it turns educators against the whole process of data collection and analysis.

In this book, we suggest that data collection must be preceded by a clear understanding and specification of the decisions that need to be made and the questions that need to be answered. In addition, a regular schedule or routine for addressing these questions and decisions must be established, and a system for developing implementation plans based on the answers and decisions must be put in place. District- and school-level teams and leaders must pinpoint their specific teaching and learning outcomes, and then identify what specific data need to be collected when, where, and how that align with these outcomes. In other words, outcome-based questions must be determined first to know what data to be collected and how they are to be analyzed. This approach has been applied more systematically for academic goals and objectives but less so for behavior outcomes. Several exemplars of this approach have documented its effectiveness and efficiency (Colvin, Kame'enui, & Sugai, 1993; Newton, Horner, Todd, Algozzine, & Algozzine, 2012; Todd, Horner, Newton, Algozzine, & Algozzine, 2011).

HAVING TIMELY AND EFFICIENT ACCESS TO USEFUL DATA DISPLAYS

If students had to wait a month to find out how they did on a spelling test or teachers had to wait until the following year to know which students had passed a major exam, they would not be able to make timely and informed decisions about what to study, what to teach (or reteach), or how to adjust their instruction. The same applies to social behavior with respect to schoolwide, classroom, and individual student behavior support. For example, at the student level, knowing that Luiz is late to class because he can avoid the daily question-and-answer warmup requires a different response than if he is meeting with his buddies behind the school building to smoke a cigarette. At the classroom level, if teachers learn from the discipline referral data that half the students have been given minor behavior incident reports for teasing and intimidation during afternoon recess, they can provide a booster social skills lesson on respectful and responsible behaviors and including others during team sports. At the school level, if less than half the student enrollment reports that the hallways, lunchroom, and other common areas are unsafe and negative, then the school climate committee can address the problem at the next faculty meeting and take some action, such as to increase active supervision or provide more precorrections and positive reinforcement.

The challenge is that data are not readily available for decision collection because, for example, (a) recording forms and processes are too cumbersome to fill out and submit; (b) when submitted, the data on the forms are not entered into a data system (e.g., spreadsheet, web-based program) if one exists; (c) when entered, summarizing and presenting the results requires complicated formulas and steps

that must be completed by "someone in the district technology department" and become available in 6–8 weeks; or (d) data displays are not in formats that are easily and quickly read and interpreted.

Throughout this book, we suggest that every practice that is associated with an important student outcome should be supported with a question or decision that informs educators about the effectiveness of that practice. Data systems must start with clear definitions of what is being collected and specific and efficient procedures for inputting those data. Data systems must provide immediate access to analyses and displays of information so that timely and informed decisions can be made at all levels—students, grade/classroom, and schoolwide. An excellent example of such a system can be examined at www.pbisapps.org.

Our approach is to (a) define data systems around the most important student behavior outcomes, (b) develop a small number of decisions and questions that address each outcome and inform action steps, (c) develop routines and schedules where these decisions and questions are addressed consistently and formally based on level (individual student, class/grade, schoolwide, district), and (d) link decisions and answers to specific actionable steps.

ACCESSING THE EXPERTISE NEEDED TO MANAGE THE DATA

Schools and districts are required to collect and submit a full array of data to state department and federal offices for various purposes, most of which have direct or indirect impact on teaching and learning at the student level. However, we focus this book directly on student behavior, especially in relation to what and how local educators make decisions on academic and behavior teaching and learning. In this context, teachers and support staff members must be fluent at analyzing, drawing conclusions, and making decisions based on these data for their immediate student needs as well as larger programmatic decisions (e.g., grade level, school).

Unfortunately, national studies by the U.S. Department of Education have reported results indicating that, in general, teachers and support staff do not have the necessary knowledge or skill base to manage data as a tool for effectively making informed decisions about student academic performance and social behavior (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). In a national district survey, 72% of districts cited lack of teacher preparation as a barrier to increased use of data systems. Similarly, Slotnik and Orland (2010) reported that teachers, administrators, and policymakers critically need the capacity to manage and interpret data correctly.

In this book, we emphasize giving schoolwide leadership teams the responsibility for defining data to be collected; determining important questions; organizing, analyzing, and displaying data; and making data-based decisions. At least two team members must be designated with the data management responsibility and authority. Data decision making is so important that we recommend two team members to anticipate and be prepared for personnel changes. Several schools and school districts have successfully developed data management systems, resulting in substantial gains in both academic performance and student social behavior. Details of these cases with illustrations are described in Chapters 8 and 9.

Guiding Principle Eight
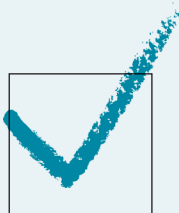
Utilize a Building Leadership Team-Based Approach

We have found that implementation of schoolwide practices and systems are less likely to be accurate, durable, or sustainable if they are led by a single individual. A charismatic teacher, school psychologist with behavior skills, or passionate administrator may be useful in "jump-starting" a process, but they alone are insufficient for having the sustainable capacity to address challenges such as changing personnel and leadership, introduction of competing initiatives, adoption of district and state policies, and addressing funding shifts and deficits. In addition, relying on an individual to lead professional development, coordinate implementation, and acquire the content expertise creates a potential problem should that person, for example, have a change in responsibilities or decide to leave or transfer from the school.

Since our goal is sustainable high fidelity implementation, we emphasize a team-led approach and process to schoolwide discipline planning. Accordingly, careful attention is given in the initial planning phase to (a) careful membership selection and stakeholder representation (e.g., grade/department, administration, classified staff, and specialists), (b) clear specification of roles and responsibilities, (c) strong administrator participation and support, (d) authority for schoolwide decision making and policy development, (d) systematic structures and routines for adequate and timely communications, and (e) decision-based data systems to inform team planning and functioning.

Researchers have found that effective operation of a team-based process is the key to successful implementation of a schoolwide plan (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Goh & Bambara, 2012). In addition, roles for the staff and team must be clearly defined; structures and opportunities for communications among all staff members must be provided; and efficient and predictable meeting processes need to be followed (Newton et al., 2012; Todd et al., 2011).

Guiding Principle Nine
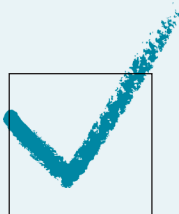
*Consider Context and Culture
When Implementing Procedural Details*

Every student, teacher, administrator, parent, and community member has a learning history that is influenced by educational opportunities, familial customs, cultural heritage, social and recreational activities, and a wide range of other contextual factors (Fallon, O'Keeffe, & Sugai, 2012; Sugai, O'Keeffe, & Fallon, 2012). When establishing a schoolwide discipline system, culture and context must be considered in the development and selection of materials and examples, implementation and evaluation of behavior practices and systems, operation of team-based activities, and evaluation of progress data and answering implementation questions.

In this book, culture and context are important in all implementation processes and phases to encourage appreciation for diversity, discourage discriminatory and hateful actions, develop a strong sense of inclusive community and positive school climate, and promote objective and responsive decision making. In particular, during development and implementation activities, we carefully consider and appreciate diversity related to race, gender, culture, disability, nationality, and other context factors that have been the focus of discriminatory behavior (e.g., hate crimes, bullying behavior, exclusion, intimidation, alienation, and isolation). In addition, school-related factors such as developmental level, grade, and dress need to be addressed.

At minimum, we encourage users of this book to carefully consider what they know about their own contexts and culture as well as those of their colleagues, students, families, and neighborhoods. Positive reinforcement, for example, has been shown to be an effective practice. However, how it looks, is delivered, and is evaluated will vary in the context of elementary vs. middle vs. high school, urban vs. rural, small vs. medium vs. large enrollment, high vs. low socioeconomic neighborhood, and Native American vs. Hispanic/Latino vs. immigrant student body and community.

SUMMARY

The key underpinning of this book is that some schools and districts have been quite successful in developing comprehensive systems, with solid documentation, to enable their students to experience school success in all important domains (academic achievement, social behaviors, and other life-skill areas) and with all students; in effect, a full array of effective services from programs and practices designed to meet the educational needs of most students to the more intensive plans for meeting the needs of high-need students.

In this chapter, we have identified nine guiding principles common to the systems implemented by successful schools. Our assumption is that many more schools can achieve similar success. However, to do so, they will need to adopt and adapt these guidelines in developing their own systems to ensure success for all of their students.