

# CHAPTER 1: TIER 3 OVERVIEW

*“Moving from Tier 2 to Tier 3 supports indicates an increase in the intensity and/or frequency of student problem behavior, and the need for more intensive behavior support.”*

Deanne Crone, Leanne Hawkin, & Rob Horner, 2015

## LEARNER OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this chapter, you will be able to:

- ▶ Articulate how individualized intervention fits within the three-tiered system
- ▶ Discuss research findings that support function-based intervention

In the three-tiered support system shown in Figure 1.1, it is estimated that 80% or more of students will positively respond to Tier 1 universal positive, preventive practices that are implemented proactively with all students.

Despite receiving Tier 1 support, approximately 10-15% of students will meet data decision rules for Tier 2 targeted intervention. These students are at risk for, but not currently exhibiting, high rates of problem behavior. Targeted supports are designed to prevent the development or decrease the frequency/intensity of problem behavior.

For some students, approximately 1-5%, more intensive support is needed. In many cases these students have extended school histories of academic and behavioral difficulties over a lengthy period of time. Because their needs may be both more significant and more chronic, support for these students will be **individualized** and **specific**. To support these students, and the adults who work with them, schools build on the established schoolwide system developed for Tier 1 and Tier 2 to accurately identify these students and design appropriate supports to teach and sustain the desired replacement behaviors.

*“On average, half of school discipline referrals are accounted for by about 5% of the student population.”*

Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000 as cited in Crone & Horner, 2003, p. 18

## A Continuum of Support for All

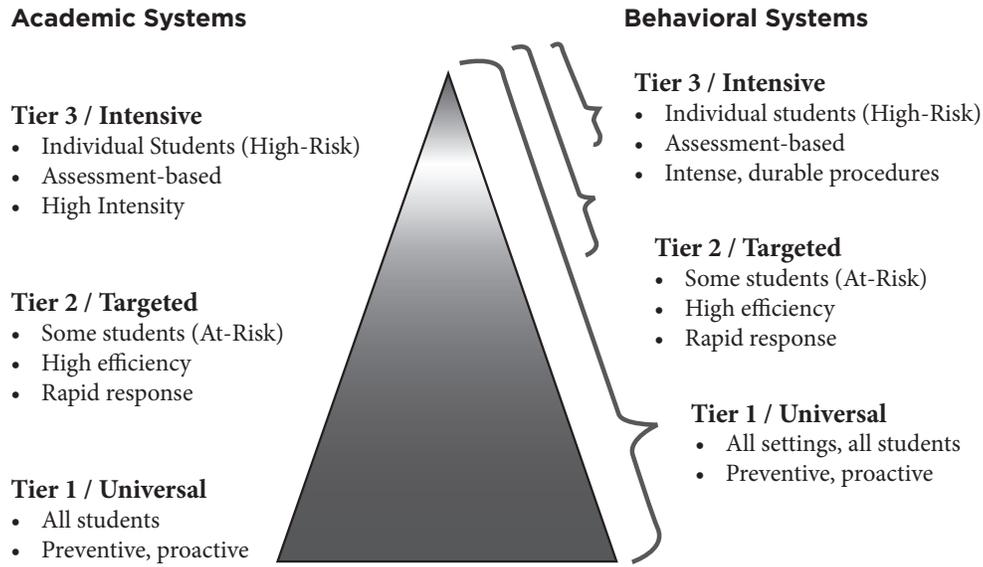


Figure 1.1

Walker, et al., 1996, Sugai & Horner, 1999, Sugai & Horner, 2006

## Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (SW-PBS) is a framework for enhancing adoption and implementation of a continuum of evidenced-based interventions to achieve academically and behaviorally important outcomes for all students. SW-PBS is defined by four inter-related elements:

### Social Competence and Academic Achievement

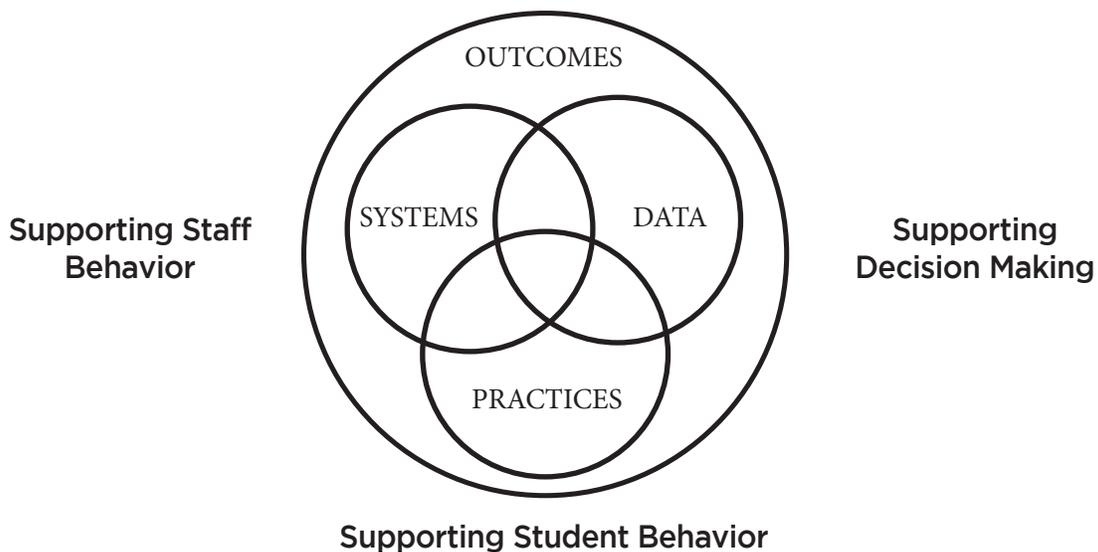


Figure 1.2

Adapted from "Social Competence and Academic Achievement Outcomes," by the Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. Copyright 2002 by the University of Oregon.

**OUTCOMES.** First, the school sets measurable and achievable outcomes related to social competence and academic achievement that are embraced by all staff and families.

**PRACTICES.** Once the desired outcomes are established, the school identifies practices (what we do for students) that are supported with educationally relevant evidence. These practices should be based on the school's needs, be relevant, effective, and efficient. They are based upon the principles of applied behavior analysis, are research based, and embrace a positive, proactive, and instructional philosophy.

**DATA.** Next, information or data (how we make decisions) is used to identify the status of current practice, support the need for change, and evaluate the impact of interventions or practices (e.g., records of behavioral incidents, attendance, tardies, achievement, staff and student perceptions, etc.).

**SYSTEMS.** Finally, the school formally puts systems (what we do to support adults, e.g. personnel, funding, policies, training) into place to ensure that the accurate implementation of the practices can and does occur. Systems enhance sustainability by documenting practices, procedures and policies.

## **MO SW-PBS Essential Components**

Missouri has identified features or components based on the PBIS National Center Implementer's Blueprint that together form a highly effective approach to schoolwide discipline (Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, 2010). Each component is vital. They operate together to ensure the positive and proactive approach to discipline likely to lead to behavioral and academic success. 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. Each is described below.

**1. COMMON PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE.** Many educators still believe that students would behave if we could just find a "bigger club," yet studies identify punishment as one of the least effective approaches (Lipsey, 1991; Costenbader and Markson, 1998; Gottfredson, 1996). Effective schools realize it is far easier and better to build adaptive behaviors through proactive instructional approaches than to try to decrease maladaptive behaviors through punishment. Before embarking on school improvement related to discipline, the beliefs about student behavior and discipline must be examined and a new, shared, positive and proactive philosophy and purpose created. Discovering shared beliefs increases commitment, provides a framework for making decisions, and is often the first step in unifying staff. Effective schools commit this positive and proactive philosophy of discipline to writing in the form of a mission, vision and beliefs. This philosophy creates the sense of direction that gives coherence to diverse activities and keeps the learning on course. Time spent examining what staff believe about student discipline and creating a shared philosophy is a wise investment in lasting change.

**2. LEADERSHIP.** Effective schoolwide 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 administrative level, but with staff members' views clearly represented in decisions. Therefore, in MO SW-PBS, leadership includes the building administrator along with a SW-PBS Leadership Team that is representative of building staff. 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 learning. Once procedures are developed, effective leadership ensures that their SW-PBS 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 every day routines (Colvin, Kame'enui and Sugai, 1993; Sprick, Wise, Markum, Haykin and Howard, 2005).

**3. CLARIFYING EXPECTED BEHAVIOR.** Just as schools rely on the direction provided by their academic curriculums, success with student discipline begins with clear behavioral expectations - a behavioral curriculum. These expectations are not lists of prohibitive rules, but a vision of responsible student behavior and social competence. Agreed upon student expectations promote consistency across staff through a common language and help develop similar tolerance levels. A curriculum of expected behaviors allows educators to be proactive and focus on catching students behaving responsibly. Clarification begins by identifying a set of three to five succinct schoolwide expectations that cross all settings. These are further clarified by identifying specific behaviors for each expectation. Expected behaviors are then identified for specific non-classroom settings (e.g., hallways, cafeteria, etc.), and classroom procedures developed to guide daily operations. Additionally, some schools adopt a social skills curriculum to further identify social competency.

**4. TEACHING EXPECTED BEHAVIOR.** Once expectations have been defined, systematic teaching of those expected behaviors must be a routine part of the school day. Teaching social behavioral skills calls upon the same methods used to teach academics - direct instruction, modeling, practice and feedback. At the beginning of the school year and in an ongoing fashion throughout the year, students should be taught how to behave responsibly in each school setting. Effective teachers spend up to one-third of their time during the first days or weeks of the new school year teaching their expectations, and frequently review or remind students of their expectations all year long (Cotton, 1995). Lesson plans, teaching schedules, and special activities and events are planned to guide the ongoing teaching of expected behaviors. Teaching of expectations should also include a plan to ensure that new students and staff are provided the opportunity to learn the behaviors that will lead to success in their new school.

**5. ENCOURAGING EXPECTED BEHAVIOR.** Staff must not only teach and model appropriate behavior, but also must watch for and provide feedback to students about their behavioral progress. This feedback or incidental teaching capitalizes on naturally occurring opportunities to reinforce students who demonstrate responsible behavior. These minute-by-minute interactions that occur between staff and students are the most important means of encouraging students to behave responsibly. Creating a school culture where expected behaviors are the norm requires that staff interact with students four times more frequently when they have engaged in appropriate behavior than when the student is misbehaving (Reavis, Jenson, Kukic and Morgan, 1993). Strategies for providing specific positive feedback to students along with a menu or continuum of positive reinforcement options are essential.

**6. DISCOURAGING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.** Just as students need specific positive feedback when behaving in accordance with expectations, inappropriate behavior also requires feedback. Inappropriate behavior in schools should be viewed as a teaching opportunity—a chance to clarify and reteach expectations. The same calm instructional approach used when students make academic errors should be used to correct social errors. Correction interrupts the behavior needing improvement so that a more appropriate response can be taught, practiced and reinforced. Associated with correction is the use of consequences, which are not to be punitive, but to extend teaching, decrease future occurrences of the

behavior, and provide students with the motivation necessary for them to begin behaving in acceptable ways. Correctional strategies and a menu or continuum of consequences to discourage inappropriate behavior provide staff with the tools to effectively change student behavior.

**7. ONGOING MONITORING.** Use of data can focus staff's efforts by identifying areas in need of improvement as well as those operating well, and keep the effort alive by providing feedback or knowledge of results that promote consistent implementation and renewal. There are several methods useful for monitoring progress and making decisions regarding student behavior and discipline: 1) Surveys–questionnaires or interviews which ask individuals to share their perceptions or experiences related to school discipline; 2) Observations–planned visits to classrooms or non-classroom areas for observing and recording the kinds of behaviors that occur and the level and effectiveness of supervision; observations can confirm or clarify the perception data gathered through surveys; 3) Behavioral Records–using available data from existing school records (e.g., office referrals, attendance, tardies, detentions, suspensions, referrals for assistance or to special education, etc.); objective data are particularly meaningful to monitor overall trends and impact of practices. Data collection is an ongoing process that assists staff to find areas where implementation is weak or inconsistent, or where policies need upgrading or extending. This data can identify the need for increased supervision, staff development, revision of practices or new procedure development.

**8. EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICES.** Effective classroom practices are based on the same overarching schoolwide and non-classroom expectations. They are then further articulated through the behaviors/rules and procedures that each instructor decides best fit that classroom. Additionally, some specific research-based techniques have been found to be equally applicable to academic and social behavioral instruction. These effective classroom practices will be taught in your Tier 1 training.

## **SW-PBS AND RTI**

The implementation of three-tiered prevention logic in SW-PBS is a direct application of the Response-to-Intervention (RtI) framework that is applied to academic content teaching and learning (e.g., literacy). The defining features of RtI are embedded with the SW-PBS approach.

### **Schoolwide PBS and Response to Intervention:**

- ▶ Implementation with Fidelity
- ▶ Continuum of Evidence-Based Interventions
- ▶ Content Expertise and Fluency
- ▶ Team-Based Implementation
- ▶ Data-Based Decision Making and Problem Solving
- ▶ Universal Screening
- ▶ Continuous Progress Monitoring

Response to Instruction/Intervention is defined as “the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions that are matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to important educational decisions” (National Association of State Directors of Special Education, 2006, p. 3). Based on a problem-solving model, RtI considers social and environmental factors as they might apply to an individual student and

provides interventions and supports as soon as a student demonstrates a need. RtI has emerged as the way to think about both early intervention assistance and resource allocation, including accessing resources through the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

In addition to addressing learning challenges, RtI strategies can be applied to improve students' social behavior. The core principles of RtI remain the same regardless of whether it is an academic or social target (Florida's Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Project, 2011).

As defined by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, academic or behavior interventions are strategies or techniques applied to instruction in order to teach a new skill, build fluency in a skill, or encourage application of existing skills to a new situation.

## **SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH**

School mental health, a dimension of overall health, describes the social-emotional development of school-age children. It is often described as a fluid state of being that can be impacted by wellness, mental illness, substance abuse, trauma, toxic stress, and the effects of adverse childhood experiences. Students who do not receive effective mental health supports are more likely to experience lower educational achievements such as attendance (Gall, Pagano, Desmond, Perrin, & Murphy, 2000), ability to concentrate (Humensky et al, 2010), as well as academic achievement and grade completion (Nelson, Benner, Lane, & Smith, 2004). Implementing comprehensive school mental health services can help develop proactive, preventative systems that foster positive school climates focused on teaching and learning. The Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support (SW-PBS) framework cannot assume the responsibility of being the only component within a comprehensive school mental health support model; however, implementation with fidelity, of the SW-PBS framework can help strengthen and support a comprehensive school mental health support model.

## **Missouri Student Support Model**

The Missouri Student Support Model (Figure 1.3) provides a graphic representation of the required elements for intensifying supports for students who continue to demonstrate difficulties after Tier 1 components are delivered.

The process begins at the base of the model with implementation of universal level supports and continues through the top of the triangle to Tier 3 intervention and planning. Elements embedded throughout the model provide structure and guidance for processes that need to occur as supports are intensified. Identified components are aligned with items included in the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) (Algozzine et al, 2014) which can be used as a self-assessment tool for monitoring progress toward development of a full continuum.

## Missouri Student Support Model

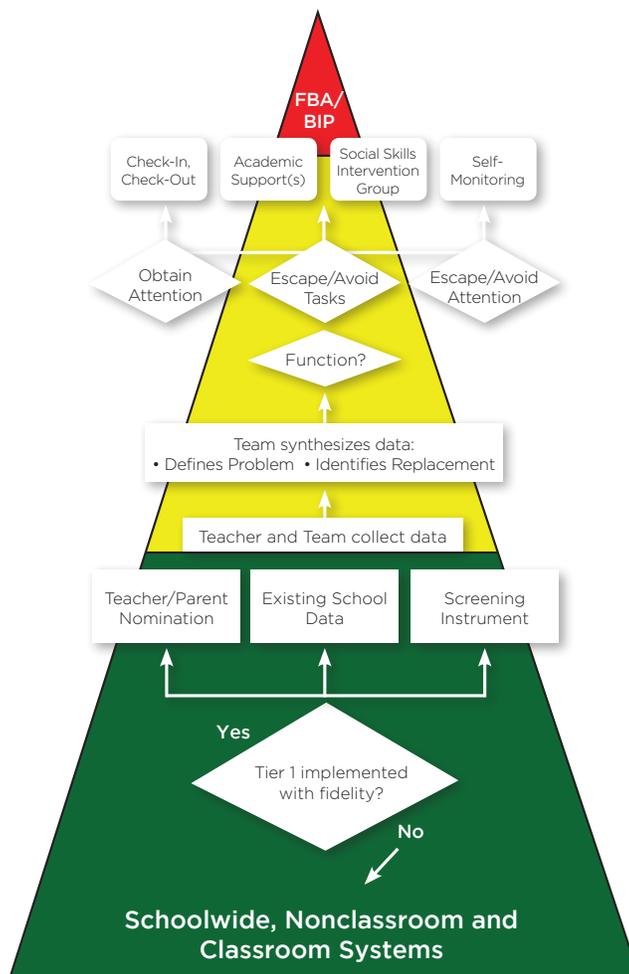


Figure 1.3

## Planning for Intervention – What’s your projected capacity?

Early intervention is the goal for all students. Tier 1 universal practices will be enough support for approximately 80% of the students in your school. This is the most efficient system of support, requiring minimal adult resources per student.

Tier 2 interventions are designed to proactively identify students at risk for developing problem behavior, or just beginning to exhibit problem behavior. When student identification is done effectively, you can estimate serving 10 – 15% of your student population over the course of the year in Tier 2 Interventions. Tier 2 Interventions require more adult involvement for fewer students, yet efficiently produce effective results when interventions are delivered with fidelity.

Students who are already exhibiting chronic problem behavior may require Tier 3 intervention. If Tier 1 and Tier 2 are being implemented in the school setting with fidelity, your school may need to provide Tier 3 interventions for approximately 1-5% of students. Tier 3 requires the highest staff to student ratio, and can be a very labor-intensive process.

At Sample Middle School, the student population is 375 students. Based on the expected percentages in tiered intervention, 300 Sample students will use expected behaviors when the school implements Tier 1 universal practices with fidelity. Approximately 37 – 56 Sample students may need additional support, or Tier 2 intervention, to reliably perform expected behaviors. Finally, it is possible that 3 – 15 students may need the most intensive level of support, a Tier 3 Behavior Intervention Plan, over the course of the school year.

How do the percentages reflect the projected needs in your building?



**ACTIVITY**

With your team, complete the chart with your school’s enrollment data to assist your planning for capacity to serve students needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 support.

Then fill in the projected needs statement that follows.

Total Student Enrollment  _____		<b>Our Numbers</b>		<b>Our Numbers</b>
	1%		5%	
	10%		15%	
	80%			

At \_\_\_\_\_, the student population is \_\_\_\_\_ students. Based on the expected percentages in tiered intervention, \_\_\_\_\_ students will use expected behaviors when the school implements Tier 1 Universal practices with fidelity. Approximately \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_ students may need additional support, or Tier 2 Intervention, to reliably perform expected behaviors. Finally, it is possible that \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_ students may need the most intensive level of support, a Tier 3 Behavior Intervention Plan, over the course of the school year.

## Base Rate and Serviceable Base Rate

Once the school leadership team has identified the projected needs, based on school enrollment, the you can begin thinking about your capacity to provide support across the tiers. Using existing school-wide data, such as attendance rate, percentages of students with 0-1 ODRs, assessment data, grades, and other collected information, the leadership team can determine the current overall response to your Tier 1 universal system.

The leadership team will then have the information to compare your school's **base rate**, or the proportion of students in the school who exhibit emotional or behavioral risk, to the expected base rates in the tiered intervention model, 80%, 15%, 5%. Next the team can calculate your **serviceable base rate**, or the amount of students identified as at risk who could reasonably be served in a small group or individual intervention *with the current resources* available in the school (Kilgus & Eklund, 2016). The school's current resources could include personnel, curriculum, materials, scheduling flexibility, team stability, and other factors supporting implementation of practices.

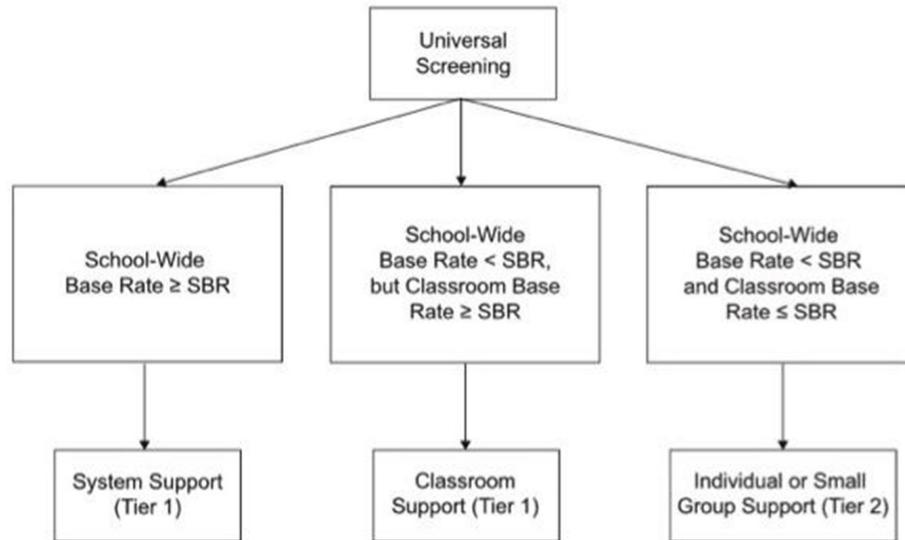
When teams are prepared for implementation with the necessary information, they are more likely to be accurate in their decision to use universal screening (see Student Identification Ch. 4) when effective supports are in place at Tier 1, adequately plan for the efficient and effective use of resources, and accurately provide the needed level of support for students with screening results indicating risk (Kilgus & Eklund, 2016).

Using the information about the current base rate and the calculated serviceable base rate allows the school team to determine whether the time is right to consider adding a systematic screening process, or if a focus on intensifying universal supports to better support the students is a better use of resources. It is inefficient and unlikely to be sustainable for schools to serve 30-40% or more of their students in intervention (Dowdy, Furlong, Raines, Boverly, Kauffman, Kamphaus, Dever, Price, & Murdock, 2015; Kilgus & Eklund, 2016). Schools can still use information from a screening instrument in the planning and provision of robust universal supports, but should keep the information about their serviceable base rate in mind.

## Using Screening Data for Decision Making

When the data from the universal screening instrument has been collected and analyzed, schools can plan for the appropriate response. Using the information about the school's projected capacity and serviceable base rate, the leadership team can identify how school-wide, class-wide, and individual supports can be provided. The following graphic from Kilgus & Eklund (2016) can be used as a decision-making guide for teams.

## Graphical Depiction of the Newly Proposed Universal Screening Procedural Framework



Note. SBR = serviceable base rate.

(Kilgus & Eklund, 2016, Figure 1, p. 127)  
Figure 1.4

### **SCHOOL-WIDE BASE RATE ≥ SERVICEABLE BASE RATE (SBR)**

If the screening results indicate the proportion of students exhibiting emotional or behavioral risk is higher than the previously calculated school serviceable base rate, the team should focus on strengthening supports at the Tier 1 universal level (Kilgus & Eklund, 2016). The leadership team needs to consider whether expectations and rules are taught and practiced sufficiently for students to perform them fluently and with performance feedback (recognition of success, re-teaching when errors develop), whether all staff have had adequate training and feedback on implementation of Tier 1 supports to be implementing with fidelity, and whether the team is using data to monitor outcomes and respond accordingly. In addition, the school may use the information to incorporate social-emotional learning more prominently in their school-wide efforts, engage in ongoing professional learning about positive mental health and development, and focus their efforts more specifically to the areas of need indicated by the data (Dowdy et al, 2015; Kilgus & Eklund, 2016).

### **SCHOOL-WIDE BASE RATE < SBR, BUT CLASSROOM BASE RATE ≥ SBR**

The screening results may indicate elevated risk rates are concentrated in particular classrooms or grade levels rather than distributed school wide, yet they still represent more students than can practically be served in small group or individual intervention (Kilgus & Eklund, 2016). In this case, the leadership team would want to look more closely at the classrooms with elevated risk to determine whether intensified class-wide supports, such as increased teaching, practicing, and feedback in following expectations or specific social skills teaching, such as Social Skills Intervention System (SSIS) Classwide Intervention Program (SSIS-CIP) or other research-based support is needed, or additional support for the teacher or

environment is required (Elliott & Gresham, 2007). Practices such as Tootling, Positive Peer Reporting, or Class-Wide Function-related Intervention Teams (CW- FIT) would be helpful in these classrooms as well (MO SW-PBS Tier 2 Workbook, 2017; Wills et al, 2009) The leadership team could provide resources to intensify class-wide supports in these rooms, while considering referring students for Tier 2 interventions in classrooms with base rates below the predetermined serviceable base rate (Kilgus & Eklund, 2016).

### **SCHOOL-WIDE BASE RATE < SBR, AND CLASSROOM BASE RATE < SBR**

When the school-wide base rate and the classroom base rate are both less than the predetermined serviceable base rate, indicating Tier 1 supports are effective for meeting the needs of the majority of the students, the team will consider small group and individual interventions (Kilgus & Eklund, 2016). Choices for small group interventions could include Check-In, Check-Out (CICO), Social Skills Intervention Groups (SSIG), Self-Monitoring, or other age, context, and function appropriate research-based intervention (MO SW-PBS, 2017). For students needing intensive individualized support, schools could plan to conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) in order to design an appropriate Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

## **IMPLEMENT TIER 1 UNIVERSALS**

The instructional process begins with each student having access to, as well as the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of a viable academic and behavioral curriculum, which demonstrates rigor and relevance. Assessment data are gathered on a regular basis and each student's response to instruction and curriculum is evaluated in order to make informed decisions.

Specific to behavioral and social skills instruction, all staff must implement universal essential components with fidelity with all students. This means schoolwide, non-classroom, and classroom expectations and rules as well as procedures are identified and taught. Students are consistently acknowledged for demonstrating expectations and following procedures. Staff members provide high rates of positive feedback (e.g. four positives to one corrective) and consistently use respectful redirection and error corrections when students use inappropriate behavior.

Universal supports are implemented continuously to ensure each student receives access to high quality instruction before determining that he or she requires additional intervention.

In addition, one of the most powerful behavioral management strategies is providing excellent instruction in an organized classroom environment. The following is a list of research-based practices for designing an effective instructional environment. This list of Eight Effective Classroom Practices is derived from two reviews of published research literature.

1. Classroom expectations are aligned with schoolwide expectations, posted, and referred to regularly.
2. Classroom procedures and routines are created, posted, taught, and referred to regularly.
3. Positive specific performance feedback is provided using a variety of strategies and at a ratio of 4:1.
4. A variety of strategies (redirect, re-teach, provide choice, and conference with the student) are used consistently, immediately, respectfully in tone and demeanor in response to inappropriate behavior.
5. A variety of strategies to increase students' opportunities to respond (e.g., turn to talk, guided notes, response cards, etc.) are used.

6. The classroom is arranged to minimize crowding and the teacher actively supervises during instruction.
7. Activity sequencing and choice are offered in a variety of ways (e.g., order, materials, partners, location and type of desk).
8. A variety of strategies are used to modify difficult academic tasks and to ensure academic success.

The Eight Effective Classroom Practices form the foundation for all individualized plans. These practices may be modified, intensified, or individualized to best support the student. Students exhibiting more chronic and/or intense behavior problems require specially designed and individualized interventions that match the need, or function, of their problem behaviors. This is where **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)** and **Behavior Intervention Planning (BIP)** are utilized. Expertise in the science of behavioral assessment is necessary for the development and implementation of individualized support plans. Fortunately, Missouri school teams who meet the readiness criteria for Tier 3 have developed the prerequisite skills and knowledge to successfully build a robust Tier 3 system.

## **FOUNDATIONS OF “BASIC” FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR ASSESSMENT AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLANS**

Conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment, or FBA, is a systematic process for gathering information to determine the relationships between a person’s problem behavior and aspects of their environment including antecedent (what happens before the problem behavior) and consequence (what happens after the problem behavior) variables. The process of FBA originates from over 50 years of applied behavior analysis (ABA) research, which supports its practicality in understanding human behavior and helping to simplify complex behavior chains or strands for more effective intervention planning (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1968; Bijou & Baer, 1961; Skinner, 1953).

Another term frequently associated with FBA is **functional analysis (FA)**. “Functional analysis consists of systematic manipulations of antecedent and consequence variables to validate their relationship to the behavior and to confirm the function of the behavior,” (Wheeler & Richey, 2010). In other words, systematic changes are made to the antecedents and consequences, and student response is measured. As such, FA is a possible step within the FBA process.

An FBA that is conducted without the FA step is considered to be a practical, simple or “basic” FBA, while an FBA that includes the FA step is considered to be a “complex” FBA (Loman, Strickland-Cohen, Borgmeier, & Horner, 2013). Emerging but compelling recent research supports the implementation of basic FBAs (i.e., limited to no more than two school routines and the problem behaviors are not physically threatening to the student or adults) that can be completed by typical school personnel (Loman & Horner, 2013; Strickland-Cohen & Horner 2015).

The “basic” FBA process that is presented in this workbook is designed to train school based personnel. This “basic” FBA/BIP process is best suited for students who exhibit mild to moderate problem behavior that, although somewhat chronic, it is not dangerous (see Figure 1.4 below). The FBA/BIP methods described in this workbook would NOT be sufficient for use with a student who engages in either serious behaviors (e.g., injurious to self and/or others), or multiple pervasive problem behaviors with varying functions. For students that exhibit complex or dangerous behavioral problems school personnel should refer to a behavior specialist in their school or district who is trained to conduct complex FBAs for students with more challenging behaviors (Loman & Horner, 2013; Loman, Strickland-Cohen, Borgmeier, & Horner, 2013).

<p><b>Basic FBA/BIP</b> methods may be used with students who:</p>	<p><b>Complex FBA/BIP</b> should be considered for use with students who:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit high frequency behaviors that are NOT dangerous (e.g., talking out, running, not following directions, not completing work).</li> <li>• Exhibit behaviors that occur in 1 to 2 school routines (e.g., specific classrooms/activities, lunch, recess).</li> <li>• Have received universal and targeted interventions that did not improve behavior.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibit dangerous behaviors (e.g., hitting, throwing objects, property destruction).</li> <li>• Exhibit pervasive and/or multiple problem behaviors with varying functions, requiring complex planning and intervention delivery</li> <li>• Demonstrate a need for crisis or wraparound planning with community agencies.</li> </ul>

*Adapted from Loman, Strickland-Cohen, Borgmeier, & Horner (2013)  
Figure 1.5*

Through conducting a “basic” FBA, it is possible to draw conclusions about the specific events that predict and /or maintain problematic behavior, and design a support plan (or BIP) that effectively addresses those events. As a part of this process, there are several critical principles that underlie Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Intervention Planning. These principals include **Quality of Life (QoL)**, **Self-determination**, and **Person-Centered Planning (PCP)**. These principles provide a model for planning collaboratively with the student and family to develop a a support plan that leads to success in school and in life after school.

**QUALITY OF LIFE (QOL)** attempts to conceptualize what “living the good life” means (Wehmeyer & Schlack, 2001). Current and ongoing research in the QOL area has identified eight core quality-of-life dimensions that should be considered during planning (Schalock, 1996): emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, material well-being, personal development, physical well being, self-determination, social inclusion, and rights. School teams are encouraged to devote adequate time to talking with the student and family to document their wishes across the QOL dimensions. Frequent examples of QOL issues in student/family conversations might include wanting the student to be able to make friends, wanting the student to know how to seek out and ask for help appropriately, or for the student to have the skills to complete assignments and perform responsibilities independently.

**SELF-DETERMINATION** refers to “acting as the primary causal agent in one’s life and making choices and decisions regarding one’s quality of life free from undue external influence or interference” (Wehmeyer, 1996, p. 24). Self determined behavior refers to actions identified by four essential characteristics (Wehmeyer & Schalock, 2001):

1. The person acted autonomously.
2. The action(s) was self-regulated.
3. The person initiated and responded to the event(s) in a “psychologically empowered” manner.
4. The person acted in a self-realizing manner.

Again, school teams are urged to build time for student collaboration in the FBA/BIP processes such that the student can, as appropriate, demonstrate the four essential characteristics of self-determination. Self-determination and QOL are often used interchangeably. When teams meet to plan for interventions to teach skills and provide the supports and information necessary to support the student at school, home, and in the community, the student’s goals, needs, wishes, and hopes must be considered. In turn, QOL and self-determined behavior are the cornerstones of Person-Centered Planning.

**PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING** is an approach that supports an individual to share his or her desires and goals, to consider different options for support and to learn about the benefits and risks of each option (Wehmeyer & Schalock, 2001). Though the process must be customized for each individual, following are general principles to follow:

- The individual is the focus of the planning process.
- The individual decides who will be invited to be on the planning team
- The team identifies natural supports such as family, friends, and/or community
- The team explores formal and informal supports to meet the expressed needs of the individual
- The individual has the opportunity to express his/her needs and desires; appropriate accommodations should be made to support meaningful participation of the individual in the planning meetings
- Some individuals may need assistance in making choices about their plans.

Therefore, Person-Centered Planning affords students a voice in the process so adults can learn about important aspects of the student's interests and needs. An understanding of the individual's past, present, and future goals helps coordinate supports around the student's needs. Another aspect of Person-Centered Planning involves recognizing the abilities of ordinary citizens who can teach people skills, model appropriate behaviors, and foster interdependent relationships for those with needs (Wehmeyer & Schalock, 2001). FBA/BIP are processes where teams provide opportunities for Quality of Life to be the guiding context, and for self-determination and Person-Centered Planning to be central to the assessment and support. These processes are more likely to result in meaningful plans that will be valued by all stakeholders.

RENEW and Wraparound are two additional processes that are frequently associated with FBA/BIP implementation. These are both outside of the context of this workbook to describe in detail. See the glossary of this workbook for further information regarding both.

## RESOURCES NEEDED

The primary resources schools need to successfully implement a Tier 3 system of support are those that schools typically find most scarce – **time** and **money**. Go to any school and ask staff members what they need more of and more than likely the answer will be, “time”.

Adequate **time** will be needed for the **development of Tier 3 systems, data, and practices**, and team members working with individual students will need time to **conduct the FBA and develop, implement, and monitor the resulting BIP**. Team members will need time to **attend trainings** to develop expertise in Tier 3 systems, data, and practices, including how to conduct an FBA and develop a BIP.

Assessment models that explain behavior but do not indicate effective interventions (e.g., assessments that identify fixed traits or aptitudes as the cause of performance) may be philosophically interesting but are useless and potentially harmful to educators and clinicians seeking to improve outcomes.

Tilly, Reschly, & Grimes, 1998 as cited in McIntosh, Brown, & Borgmeier, 2008, p. 8

Crone and Horner (2003) offer the following considerations for administrators and district personnel to keep in mind when planning how to make the best use of these valuable assets.

Schools need to consider ways to **increase the efficiency** of the time they are allotted for team meetings. Recommendations for effective and efficient team meetings are discussed in the *Tier 3 Core and Action Teams* chapter of this workbook. Additionally, schools can **identify existing committees** that serve a similar function to the Tier 3 team and determine if that group can be expanded or modified to become the Tier 3 team, thus eliminating multiple teams with overlapping purposes.

When administrators are allocating financial resources for Tier 3, consideration needs to be given to whether or not a percentage of **full-time equivalency** (FTE) of a staff position needs to be provided for an individual to coordinate the Tier 3 process. Another consideration is how **release time** will be provided for team members to attend Tier 3 training and any associated costs such as substitute pay, mileage, and registration fees. A third budgetary issue is allocating resources for **materials** to support the BIPs that are developed, such as reinforcers.

## **FBA/BIP: TEAM BASED PROCESSES**

The school's **Tier 3 system** must include:

- ▶ personnel who are trained in the basic principles of behavior, functional assessment, and behavior support planning
- ▶ a system for early identification and referral
- ▶ an organizational structure that allows for flexible teaming and planning

The **identification process** for individualized support can be initiated through:

- ▶ systematic tracking of data to monitor student response to Tier 2 intervention
- ▶ identifying the presence of chronic behavior
- ▶ identifying the presence of intense behavior
- ▶ teacher, family member or student request for assistance/nomination
- ▶ other means defined by the school/district, such as universal screening.

As with Tier 1 and Tier 2 systems of support, the development of **Tier 3 systems, data, and practices are led by a team**. In fact, a small Tier 3 Core Team will develop and oversee the Tier 3 system, while individual Action Teams are formed to design and implement individual student plans. The Action Teams should include those adults who are typically involved with the student on a daily basis along with other staff who have more specialized skills (i.e. school counselors, social workers, special education staff, school psychologists, administrators, and school nurses). If the teams are to be successful, they must be given the time to **meet on a regular basis**. Detailed information about team roles and responsibilities will be provided in *Tier 3 Core and Action Teams* chapter of this workbook.

A **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)** includes the team working with the teacher(s) to identify the interactions between the student's problem behavior and the environments where it is most likely to occur. Other information is also gathered (i.e. interviewing others who have and/or are currently work with the student, reviewing school records, interviewing family members and student).

The team then describes the behavior in **observable and measurable terms**. For instance, “When Joe is asked to turn in his homework in math class, he verbally refuses on approximately 4 out of 5 days.” This description not only serves as a means to correctly identify the behavior, but phrases it in such a way that another person can understand the problem and directly observe it.

A **context analysis** provides information about when the problem behavior is likely (and not likely) to occur and possible **antecedents** and **consequences** to determine the **function** of the behavior.

After developing a **Summary Statement**, a designated person(s) will **observe** the student in the settings with high and low likelihoods of the problem behavior to **confirm the Summary Statement**. After the Summary Statement is confirmed, all information the team gathered will be used to develop a Behavior Intervention Plan.

The **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** is designed using an **instructional approach**, similar to that used by teachers for designing academic instruction. It defines how an educational setting will be changed to improve the behavioral success of the student. Drawing on information from the Summary Statement, the Behavior Intervention Plan describes:

- ▶ how the environment will be changed to prevent or reduce occurrences of problem behavior.
- ▶ what and how the student will be taught to use the desired replacement behavior.
- ▶ the consequences that will be provided to encourage positive behavior, limit inadvertent reward of problem behavior, and where appropriate, discourage problem behavior.

Follow-up observations by team members, **on-going monitoring** of specified data and other means may be employed to make data-based decisions to revise, refine, end or continue the plan. The BIP will be **reviewed by the team** on a regular basis. As part of the ongoing monitoring, the team will assess **fidelity of implementation** and **social validity**.

Many of the problems exhibited by students in need of an FBA and BIP are long-standing and significant, so school personnel must understand that it is likely to take extended periods of time and intensive intervention before the problems will begin to improve. Any plan may be influenced by unforeseen changes in the student or school’s situation. For these reasons it is important for all involved to continue to dedicate the time, resources and personnel as necessary to increase the likelihood of the plan’s success.

#### DISCUSSION



How would you describe Tier 3 to your staff based upon your implementation of Tiers 1 and 2? What is the relationship between FBA and BIP?

## Research Supporting Effectiveness of FBA/BIP

There are many studies demonstrating the positive effects of FBA-based intervention and a growing body of research signifying that typical school personnel, with proper training, can develop effective BIPs. A sampling of research results are shared in this section.

Gage, Lewis, and Stichter (2012) reviewed 69 FBA studies with 146 subjects and found that interventions based on Functional Behavior Assessment **reduced problem behavior an average of 70.5%**. These studies included students ages 3-16 and were conducted in schools that had students with or at risk for emotional or behavioral disorder.

In another study, researchers examined the effectiveness of Behavior Intervention Plans based on FBA and those that were not based on function. **Behavior Intervention Plans that were function-based had greater impact** on reducing the number of problem behaviors (Ingram, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 2005).

Newcomer and Lewis (2004) found that **interventions based on function were more effective** than other interventions that were based on the topography of the behavior (what the behavior looks like or sounds like). Furthermore, the results indicated that the introduction of an **intervention that does not address function increases the problematic behavior**.

In a study where the teacher conducted the assessment process within the natural classroom setting and during regular classroom routines, a student's **disruptive behavior was substantially decreased when the function-based intervention was implemented**. Additionally, the teacher, as well as the student, rated the intervention as acceptable (Hoff, Ervin & Friman, 2005).

Research findings by Cook, et al., 2012 demonstrated that **school staff**, with appropriate training, **can develop evidence-based Behavior Intervention Plans that improve student outcomes**. This study also found that the degree to which the plans were implemented as intended related significantly to the degree of improvement made by the students. In other words, the **interventions implemented with fidelity had greater impact** than those that were not implemented with fidelity.

Results of research by Payne, Scott, and Conroy (2007) demonstrated "clear and immediate decreases in problem behavior with the introduction of function-based interventions and similarly strong increases with each introduction of non-function-based intervention" (p. 158). In other words, **"function based interventions simply were found to be more effective in reducing problem behaviors"** (p. 171). In this study, teachers had a high level of involvement in developing the interventions and accepted the practices and procedures that were implemented.

In a review of the school-based literature on FBA, the overwhelming majority (98.7%) of studies using FBA to derive interventions produced behavior change in the desired direction.

Ervin, Radford, Berisch, Piper, Ehrhardt, & Poling, 2001 as cited in Hoff, Ervin, & Friman, 2005, p. 46

### ACTIVITY



You are having a conversation with a colleague who is curious about the research supporting function-based intervention and whether it is practical to ask "regular school staff" to be involved. With your team, prepare a three to five sentence response to your coworker.

## Action Planning

In the same way, SW-PBS teams at Tier 1 and Tier 2 used action planning to record a list of all the tasks the team needed to finish to meet a goal or an objective, the action planning process continues in Tier 3. Action Plans are useful because they give your team a framework for thinking about how to complete a task or project efficiently. The following features are typically included in the action planning process.

- ▶ **GOALS.** During each day of training, goals or needs for development will emerge. These needs are drawn from items within the Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) and will answer the question, “What things do we need to do to move our work forward?”
- ▶ **MEASURES OF SUCCESS.** Next, you will want to identify how you will know you have met your goal and been successful. What completed products, data, or processes will be in place when you have finished your work?
- ▶ **ACTIVITIES/STEPS.** After identifying the goal and having a clear picture of what success will look like, teams begin brainstorming a list of all the things that need to be done to achieve the goal. You will typically want to start at the beginning: What is the very first action you’ll need to take? What comes next? Are there activities that should be prioritized to meet specific deadlines? Try to make a logical progression of each thing you need to do.
- ▶ **TIMELINES.** Next match your steps or activities with timelines. What is realistic to get accomplished in a certain time? While timelines help with accountability, they may change as you move forward.
- ▶ **RESOURCES.** It is helpful to think in advance, while planning, what resources will be required to complete the tasks. What materials or assistance will be needed?
- ▶ **PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE.** This step is the delegation process. Which tasks should be delegated to specific team members or others? This, too, is a good accountability mechanism to help be sure the work gets done.

Finally, the action plan includes a column to indicate when activities have been completed. A simple check or date can be used to document finished tasks.

A blank action plan form is included in this workbook in *Chapter 11: Action Planning*.