

POSITIVE FOCUS

SPECIAL EDITION

This special issue of the MO SW-PBS Positive Focus Newsletter is devoted to 4 exemplary schools sharing their own story, in their own words. What do these schools have in common? All of these schools happen to be elementary schools. Each of these schools are longtime partners in the tiered work. Each sustained commitment to the work for over a decade. In addition, each has implemented with fidelity at multiple tiers, as measured by the MO SW-PBS Award of Excellence. Most importantly all four of these schools have been active as participants and model presenters at the annual MO SW-PBS Summer Institute, where implementers from across Missouri and the Midwest gather to learn, share and grow.

It is this spirit of sharing, connecting, and engaging in activities to continually refresh their multi-tiered systems of support, in striving to efficiently and effectively support the faculty, staff, students and families they serve and sustaining a "can do" spirit, even in the face of unexpected challenges such as the Covid-19 Pandemic, that identifies each school to be among the best in our state. It is this passionate commitment to growth and excellence that signifies each school as worthy of being recognized as a **Dr. Mary Richter Award Nominee School in 2022.**



The Dr. Mary Richter Award honors commitment to the ideals, principles & practices of positive behavior support

Meet our Exemplar Schools

Maplewood Elementary
North Kansas City School District

Topping Elementary
North Kansas City School District

Union Chapel Elementary
Park Hill

William Lynch Elementary
Salem-80

WHAT IS THE DR. MARY MILLER RICHTER AWARD?

The Dr. Mary Miller Richter Awards are presented each year to honor one school and one district that exemplify the ideals, principles, and practices of positive behavior support. The award recipients demonstrate a firm commitment to improving the lives of students, the educators who teach them, and the community in which the school resides through innovation, creativity, and/or a firm commitment to staying the course despite barriers. Regional consultants, district leadership personnel, and SW-PBS teams are encouraged to nominate deserving schools and/or districts. All active participating schools and districts, regardless of the tier at which they implement, are eligible for these

awards.



MAPLEWOOD ELEMENTARY, NORTH KANSAS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

PLANNING TO INCLUDE FAMILIES IN YOUR PBIS PLAN

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FAMILY INCLUSION IN PBIS

As PBIS Teams meet this summer to make plans for next year, it is important to begin thinking about how you are going to engage families in your school's PBIS plan. Including your school families' perspectives, values and voices within the development and implementation of your PBIS system makes your school responsive to the needs of students and families. Intentional efforts to engage and partner with families shows they are valued as equal partners in the work of educating students.

As you begin this work, think about starting with the foundational elements of families in PBIS.

Building Positive Relationships

As a team, think about some of the ways that you will make proactive efforts to build and maintain positive, trusting relationships with families. Recognizing families' needs and cultural differences leads to greater understanding and respect among all involved. Teams can rely on positive actions used already or collect data by surveying families through the school year.

Engaging in two-way communication

As a team, think about how you have been communicating with families. Providing parent newsletters, flyers, and handbooks to families on PBIS is great, but this is one way communication. Make sure to plan for two-way communication with families to begin the year. Plan for opportunities for families to provide feedback on PBIS practices.

Ensuring equitable family representation

Before the start of the school year, reflect on how equitable involvement with families was the previous school year. As a team, think about your family groups and reflect on how you are reaching them through communication. Make sure that translation services are in place as well as parent feedback on when are the best times for family and school events.

Thinking about the foundational elements of families in PBIS before the beginning of the year will ensure that all families are kept up to date on school PBIS practices and PBIS events!

Nick Pettit is the principal of Maplewood Elementary in the North Kansas City School District. Maplewood was awarded Gold level recognition for implementation of School-wide Positive Behavior Support.



TOPPING ELEMENTARY, NORTH KANSAS CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

MAXIMIZING CICO

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MAXIMIZING CHECK IN CHECK OUT

Like many schools, last year (21-22), we noticed a huge increase in incident reports as we returned back to a more “normal” school year. A Lot of the behaviors were attention seeking so we started to ramp up our CICO supports to meet our needs. Our behavior team was quickly overwhelmed with a large caseload so we needed to find a solution fast!

Our solution was to build up the staff that were able to help with CICO so that we could keep increasing our Tier 2 support to meet our student needs. Our PBIS district coordinator came to our school and did an all staff Tier 2 training. This training covered the purpose of CICO and how to implement it with fidelity. This way anyone in our building could be a CICO facilitator. This allowed us to create a more personalized experience for our students to get them the right mentor. This also helped staff better understand our Tier 2 process, which helps with all staff implementing intervention plans with fidelity.

Once the staff was trained on CICO our Tier 2 team created a list of available students on CICO needing a mentor. This list was then emailed out to staff to sign up for a student to work with. The first list filled up fast! Our teachers, especially support staff, were so excited to jump in and work with our students. Because of this we had some great match ups with mentors and mentees.

After we implemented our overhauled CICO support, our incident reports decreased by over 50% within the next month! This also freed up our behavior team at the start and end of the school day. This allowed the team to be more present in certain areas of the school that they had not been able to in the past due to being tied down to CICO. Overall, the CICO overhaul was a huge success that increased our student and staff sense of belonging. Our goal for next year is to continue our all staff tier two training, but also add in social skills training as well!



UNION CHAPEL ELEMENTARY, PARK HILL

AT UNION CHAPEL WE ARE ALL 'EDU-GATORS'

DR. STEVEN ARCHER, PRINCIPAL - ARCHERS@PARKHILL.K12.MO.US

BUILDING COMMUNITY

When our Union Chapel Elementary School team attended our first PBIS training 14 years ago, it wasn't a requirement. We weren't a building in crisis. At that time, our teachers already developed pretty clear expectations. Our Gators already did a pretty good job of following them. But that's exactly where we realized there were missing pieces. Teachers' high expectations differed from room to room and across various settings in our building. Students who did what they were supposed to do were not systematically recognized.

From that first training, we developed our PBIS framework and clear, school-wide expectations: Gators Always Try our Best to: Own our actions, Respond respectfully, and Stay safe. Our Gator Pledge is one we say as a school every morning, right after the Pledge of Allegiance. Expectations across our campus of 617 students are worded in kid-friendly terms in our school-wide matrix and in setting-specific posters. Our PBIS lessons are consistent with these, as well, and all our PBIS resources are housed in a digital hub in our Google drive so all staff members can access and reference them whenever they need to reteach or be reminded of our school-wide expectations.

In our early years, one person counted paper Gator Golds each month, which was, of course, exhausting! In more recent years, we've added an online resource, PBIS Rewards, to help us look at various aspects of our PBIS implementation. Each month, we report points to staff by grade level, gender, race, and expectation, looking for where we may need to align who and what are being positively reinforced. An equally important aspect of our PBIS work is our SWIS data, which also gets reported to our staff each month. We look for trends in location, time of day, and days of the week, among other things. Our PBIS Tier 1 Team identifies opportunities for us to reteach and reinforce, and to engage in data-based decision making.

Our Focus on Academics and Behavior (FAB) Team identifies students whose behavior shows us they may benefit from more strategic supports. Both teams are led by teachers, representative staff members, and administration. Along with a strong Tier 1 foundation, our close monitoring and intervention for individual students results in positive outcomes. Through September this year, just 3.66% (22) of our students received 2-5 ODRs. As well, only four (0.67%) students have received more than that. Strong systems mean we can support students who need it, even in a large elementary. Our Fall 2022 Panorama survey data for students indicate Union Chapel students feel safe and report strong teacher-student relationships. Their favorable responses are well above the national average for both areas. The same is reflected in parents' survey responses.

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BUILDING COMMUNITY

We're now in our second year of a recognition process staff helped create, and one that takes the administrators out of the role of "catching" someone doing the many positive things they do each and every day. Our reward system for staff stems from our PBIS Rewards – specifically the rewards they issue to students each month. The more they recognize students, the more they, themselves, can be recognized. Finding items that are valuable to staff and compliant with district requirements was tough. So where do we get these items? I made a shameless plug to district office departments and schools into which we feed for left-over swag. We got shirts, journals, lanyards, and more. I purchase Sonic drinks for randomly selected staff members from our top-half of PBIS Rewards awarders each month. All staff who issue PBIS Rewards receive tickets they can redeem for items from the staff "treasure box," which are offered at different "price points," just like the kids. We have a very generous PTA, which purchased \$5 gift cards from a variety of local businesses. We look for free rewards; jeans coupons are a HIT! We're now able to recognize our staff for supporting our PBIS implementation, regardless of their role at Union Chapel, because we're ALL EduGators!

While most schools in our district adopted other models for several years, I'm pleased to share that this is the second year our district has come back to PBIS as our district-wide framework. It aligns well with our Park Hill School District beliefs about behavior and it provides consistency, building to building.

Over the years, our staff has earned silver, bronze, and six consecutive years of gold Awards of Excellence from the Missouri Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support program. We have been nominated for the Dr. Mary Richter Award twice. We have presented at the Summer Institute and submitted a short film, as well. One of our proudest honors comes from being asked to start our district-wide behavior support program in 2016. Students with significant behavioral challenges come from any of our district's 11 elementary schools and receive targeted behavior support from a team of experts with the goal that they will return to their home schools when they reach behavior goals. PBIS is a key tool in our successful work with these students.

Without a doubt, Union Chapel Elementary is a stronger learning community because of our 14 years of PBIS implementation. The framework allows us to be flexible and responsive to the needs in our building, which ultimately creates a more positive learning environment for us all.

WILLIAM LYNCH ELEMENTARY, SALEM 80

MY ADMINISTRATIVE SW-PBS JOURNEY: AN ONGOING TALE

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FIDELITY TO THE PROCESS

Let me begin by stating that I am not perfect—as a person or in my SW-PBS implementation. Having made that disclaimer, I hope my experience might help another administrator who is considering whether to either begin or continue their own SW-PBS journey.

In my third year as principal at William Lynch Elementary (my first SW-PBS school), I have become a firm believer in the effect that SW-PBS has on the climate of our building.

In the beginning of my first year at William Lynch, my efforts to discipline were highly individualized and inconsistent. I thought I was doing well for the students because I was trying to meet their specific needs. What I did not realize at the time—but absolutely understand and believe now—is that positive behavior support includes consistent teaching and implementation with fidelity of SW-PBS principles and practices.

After a short period of time, the SW-PBS team leaders in our building sat down with me to discuss the effect that my lack of fidelity to SW-PBS practices was having on the school community. It took a tremendous amount of trust on both sides to discuss these issues and I will be forever grateful for the courage of the individuals who undertook the challenge.

Over the course of that first year, I worked to learn all that I could about SW-PBS. With the help of our building team leaders, I adjusted my discipline practices to ensure consistency and fidelity to processes that were agreed upon by our school community. To be honest, it was a period of intense change for me in theory and in practice and was a bit uncomfortable. There was one moment when I considered doing away with the whole process! I am so grateful that I did not.

Throughout the past three years, SW-PBS has changed my principal life. Where I used to be constantly running to figure out what to do in each individual situation, I now have a plan in place for all Tier 1 behavior referrals. I am much more consistent in parental involvement and communication. We have quickly and easily implemented Tier 2 strategies and practices for students who come for a second time to the office. In those cases, the Tier 2 team meets frequently with those teachers to coordinate efforts to help those students. My issues with “frequent flyers” have essentially disappeared! Our building is running smoothly and the teachers, students and parents are happy! I cannot imagine trying to lead a building without using SW-PBS!

Each Monday, I clean my office and wipe down all surfaces. I have a student chair and desk for use if a student comes to the office to spend their recess. On Mondays, after cleaning the chair, I always put it on top of the desk and it stays there until a student comes to the office with a discipline concern. I mention this because there was one point during the past couple of months when the chair did not come off the desk for two and a half weeks!

Our building is not perfect. Our community is at times flawed. But we LOVE SW-PBS at William Lynch Elementary. I would be happy to visit with any administrator who is considering implementation.

**CONGRATULATIONS
ON BEING AWARDED
THE DR. MARY RICHTER
SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE
AWARD FOR 2022!**

Dr. Mary Miller Richter Ph.D. was the founding state Director of Missouri Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support (MO SW-PBS). Mary was born Mary Frances Miller and raised in Montgomery City with her roots deep within the soil of her family's Century Farm, Woodstock Acres. She taught in K-12 general and special education classrooms, served as special education coordinator, and building administrator. Mary completed her doctoral degree at the University of Missouri-Columbia and applied her knowledge and expertise to the methodical development of a statewide framework for the multi-tiered system of behavioral support within the state of Missouri that is considered a national and international exemplar. Mary had a vision to provide evidence-based materials including workbooks, training materials, a website with online courses and related publications for universal, targeted and intensive supports. She designed a plan to provide a regional network of Consultants the training and supports they needed to deliver professional learning and coaching to partner schools.

Mary was also visionary in her understanding of implementation science. She planned for the eventual statewide shift toward a key to sustainability, the implementation of the work by district leadership teams (DLTs). District level work is now enacted in MO DESE **District Continuous Improvement** (DCI) framework. She also knew that engaging student and family voice was critical to adoption and sustained fidelity. Surveying students, families and staff is now an expectation in the **Missouri School Improvement Plan-6** (MSIP-6). Mary also engaged in dialog with state level colleagues regarding an eventual integration of the SW-PBS multi-tiered system of support for behavior (MTSS-B) with academic Response to Intervention (RTI) and with a 2022 State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) the state of Missouri is now in planning stages of **DCI-MTSS**.

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How can schools or districts be nominated for the Dr. Mary Miller Richter Award for their exemplary work? Parents or community members, SW-PBS Consultants, school or district leadership, and school or district SW-PBS teams are encouraged to nominate deserving schools and districts. The award recipients will demonstrate a firm commitment and dedication to improving the lives of students, the educators who teach them, and the community in which the school or district resides through innovation, creativity, and/or a firm commitment in staying the course despite barriers. All actively participating schools and districts, regardless of level of implementation, are eligible for the Award.

To learn more go to
<https://pbissmissouri.org/dr-mary-richter-award/>