

SESSION 2J:

BUILDING STRONG TIER 1 SYSTEMS

AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL

SESSION OBJECTIVES



1

Learn how Fulton Middle School trained staff to develop a shared understanding and consistent implementation of Tier 1 practices.

2

Examine strategies for explicitly teaching behavioral expectations and reinforcing those expectations across settings.

3

Identify teaming structures and routines that support ongoing collaboration, data review, and continuous improvement.

MEET THE PRESENTERS



Daniel Rector

Executive Director of Student Services
Fulton Public Schools



Meg Plybon

Assistant Principal
Fulton Middle School

District perspective + Building perspective = Shared ownership of Tier 1 systems



FULTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DISTRICT & MIDDLE SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS | 2025-2026



DISTRICT PK-12

2,195
STUDENTS



MIDDLE SCHOOL 6-8

525
STUDENTS



FREE & REDUCED LUNCH
% OF STUDENTS QUALIFYING

DISTRICT

55.4%

FREE 46.1%
REDUCED 9.3%

MIDDLE SCHOOL

53.82%

FREE 44.47%
REDUCED 9.35%



High school FRL rates are likely underreported due to application trends.



ATTENDANCE
90/90 RATE

Students attending 90% or more of school days

DISTRICT

80.64%

MIDDLE SCHOOL

79.92%



STUDENT MOBILITY RATE

Students entering or exiting during the school year

DISTRICT

17.5%

District Rate

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

WHITE

MULTI-RACIAL

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN

HISPANIC/LATINO + ASIAN

AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE, PACIFIC ISLANDER

DISTRICT

(2,195 STUDENTS)

70.6%
(1,549)

12.7%
(279)

10.3%
(225)

5.8%
(127)

0.5%
(15)

MIDDLE SCHOOL

(525 STUDENTS)

69.33%
(364)

12.57%
(66)

9.71%
(51)

7.62%
(40)

0.57%
(3)

Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

REAL TALK

Raise your hand if ...

- You have ever said: “We already talked about that.”
- You have ever had a staff member as a question that was covered during back-to-school PD.
- You have ever had a student act surprised by an expectation you know has been taught multiple times.



REAL TALK

The reality is ...

- We do not have perfect systems.
- We are never “done” implementing Tier 1.
- Every year we gain staff and lose staff.
- Every year students change.
- Every year priorities shift.

Every year we revisit things we thought everyone already knew because...

EVERY AUGUST,

SOMEBODY LEAVES.

SOMEBODY ARRIVES.

SOMEBODY FORGOT.

AND SOMEBODY SWEARS WE’VE NEVER
DONE PBIS BEFORE.





it's been 84 years...
STILL WAITING



ALIGNMENT + CONSISTENCY = OUTCOMES

*Tier 1 systems are less about arriving
and more about the journey of maintaining.*

**CONSISTENCY
IS AN **ADULT**
BEHAVIOR**



SHARED UNDERSTANDING

DOESN'T HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT

EXPECTATIONS

Shared expectations for students.

LANGUAGE

Common language across settings.

REINFORCEMENT

Shared reinforcement practices.

INSTRUCTION

Common approach to teaching behavior.

Consistency begins with shared understanding.

WE START BEFORE STUDENTS ARRIVE

1

PBIS TEAM

Leadership team prepares training.

2

MATRIX

Expectations and language reviewed.

3

4:1

Positive acknowledgement practices.

4

CLASSROOMS

Teachers build classroom expectations.

5

DAY ONE

First-week lessons ready to go.



Alignment starts before students walk through the doors.



WE SHOW, NOT JUST TELL

We don't just tell teachers what implementation should look like.

We show them.

EXPECTATIONS

EXAMPLES

DISCUSSION

Staff need examples, not just expectations.

COMMON LANGUAGE CREATES CONSISTENCY

SAFE

RESPONSIBLE

RESPECTFUL

Students shouldn't have to learn a new set of expectations every time they enter a classroom.



EVERY CLASSROOM
EVERY HOUR
EVERY STUDENT

SAME EXPECTATIONS • SAME LANGUAGE • SAME MESSAGE

CONSISTENCY ISN'T A DESTINATION. IT'S AN EXPERIENCE.

HOME OF THE
HORNETS

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED



**CLARITY
MATTERS**



**CONSISTENCY
MATTERS**



**MODELING
MATTERS**



**REPETITION
MATTERS**

Alignment requires maintenance.

TEACHING BEHAVIOR

— IS PART OF OUR —

CURRICULUM



We teach expected behavior the same way we teach academic skills.



HORNET PRIDE

DEDICATED INSTRUCTIONAL TIME



**SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
LEARNING**



**BEHAVIOR
INSTRUCTION**



**ACADEMIC
SUPPORT**

Dedicated time ensures every student receives behavioral instruction.

WE TEACH WHAT STUDENTS NEED



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS STILL CRAVE POSITIVE ATTENTION.

What they reject is
fake recognition.

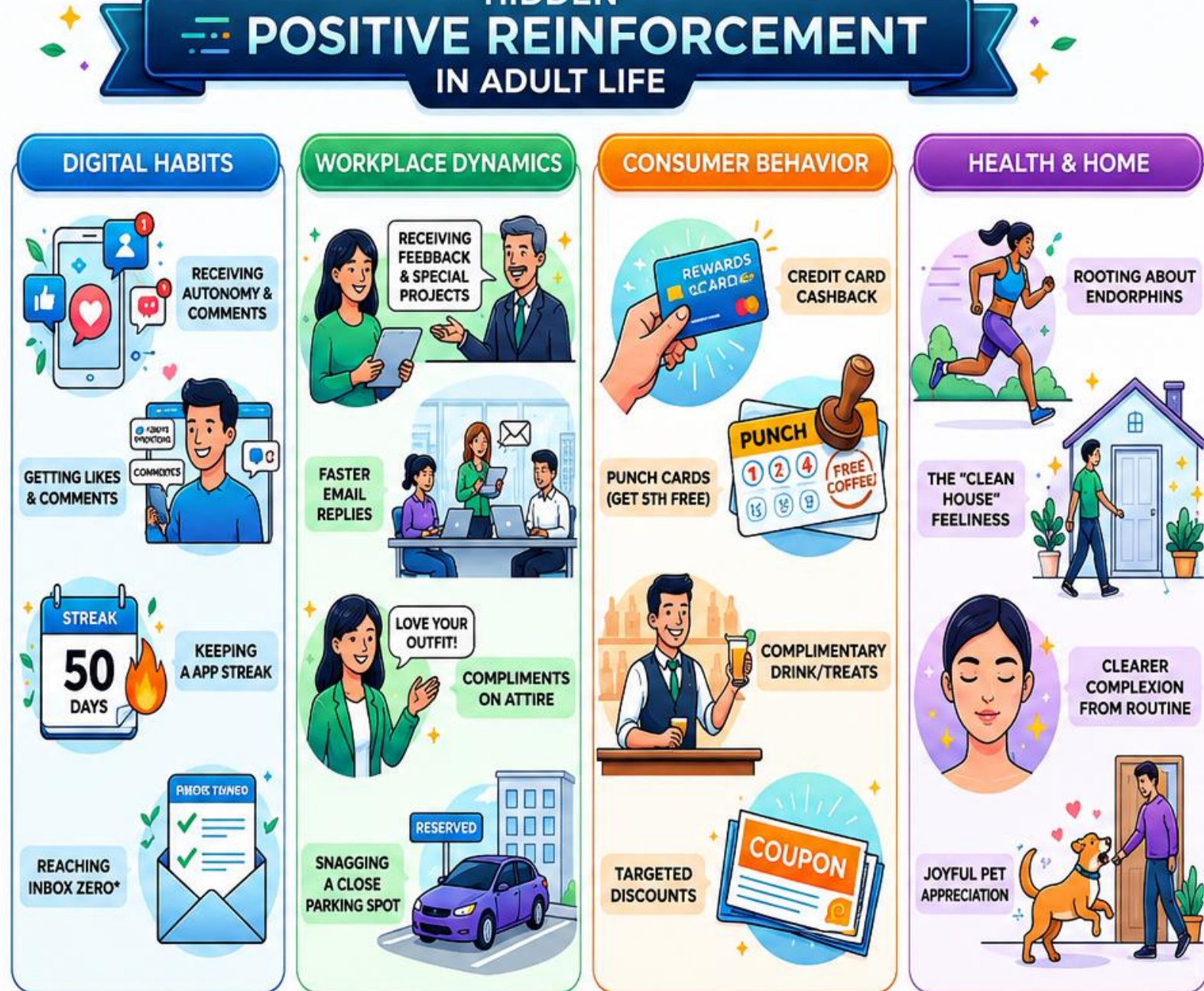


RECOGNITION IS FEEDBACK

Adults respond to:

- ✓ Praise
- ✓ Recognition
- ✓ Incentives
- ✓ Feedback
- ✓ Appreciation
- ✓ Opportunities

We don't reject recognition.
We reject recognition
that feels meaningless.



THINGS THAT UNKNOWINGLY SHAPE OUR ACTIONS

WHAT RECOGNITION LOOKS LIKE **AT FMS**



DAILY

- ✓ Positive Specific Feedback
- ✓ Classroom Goals
- ✓ Student Self-Monitoring
- ✓ Progress Tracking



Recognition begins
in the classroom.



INTERMITTENT

- ✓ iSucceed Levels
- ✓ Student Incentives
- ✓ Reinforcement Activities
- ✓ Celebration Opportunities



Recognition is
acknowledged
frequently.



LONG-TERM

- ✓ Recognition Assemblies
- ✓ Motivational Speakers
- ✓ Special Events
- ✓ End-of-Year Trips



Recognition becomes
part of the culture.



CONSISTENT RECOGNITION.

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS.

MEANINGFUL IMPACT.

WHAT STUDENTS EARN

- ✓ FREE
- ✓ LOW COST
- ✓ EXPERIENCE BASED
- ✓ SCHOOL CONNECTED

The goal isn't bigger prizes.
The goal is sustained motivation.

LEVEL 1	10 minutes of free time
LEVEL 2	20 minutes of free time
LEVEL 3	25 minutes of free time
LEVEL 4	Choose your own seat for the hour <i>(vote to change)</i>
LEVEL 5	Admin provided snack during class
LEVEL 6	Homework/classwork pass <i>(vote to change)</i>
LEVEL 7	Admin provided basketball during Hornet Pride
LEVEL 8	Admin provided popcorn

LEVEL 9	Outdoor lunch pass <i>(vote to change)</i>
LEVEL 10	Soda
LEVEL 11	Ice cream or popsicle
LEVEL 12	Hornet Pride Pole Barn Free Time
LEVEL 13	Popcorn and a movie
LEVEL 14	Hornet Pride on the field
LEVEL 15	Hornet Pride Dodgeball
LEVEL 16	Hornet Pride or Escape Room Challenge



MAKE GOOD CHOICES.



EARN POINTS.



REACH NEW LEVELS.



SUCCEED!



CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Recognition becomes part of the culture.



WHAT WE'VE LEARNED ABOUT **RECOGNITION**



STUDENTS VALUE EXPERIENCES

Students remember experiences more than prizes.



SMALL THINGS MATTER

Some of our most popular reinforcers cost little or nothing.



RELATIONSHIPS DRIVE BUY-IN

Recognition has greater impact when it comes from adults students trust.



CONSISTENCY BEATS COST

A simple system implemented consistently outperforms an elaborate system implemented inconsistently.

DID IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

**More students in class.
More opportunities to teach.**

MORE STUDENTS. MORE LEARNING.

**OUT-OF-SCHOOL
SUSPENSION DAYS**
2024-2025

603



2025-2026

324

46% REDUCTION

**90/90
ATTENDANCE**
2024-2025

71.83%



2025-2026

79.92%

+8.09 PERCENTAGE POINTS



**Students cannot benefit from instruction, intervention,
or relationships if they are not in school.**

FEWER INTERRUPTIONS TO LEARNING

2023-2024

7.6

OFFICE MANAGED
REFERRALS PER DAY

2024-2025

7.3

OFFICE MANAGED
REFERRALS PER DAY

2025-2026

5.1

OFFICE MANAGED
REFERRALS PER DAY



≈ **30% FEWER**
OFFICE-MANAGED REFERRALS

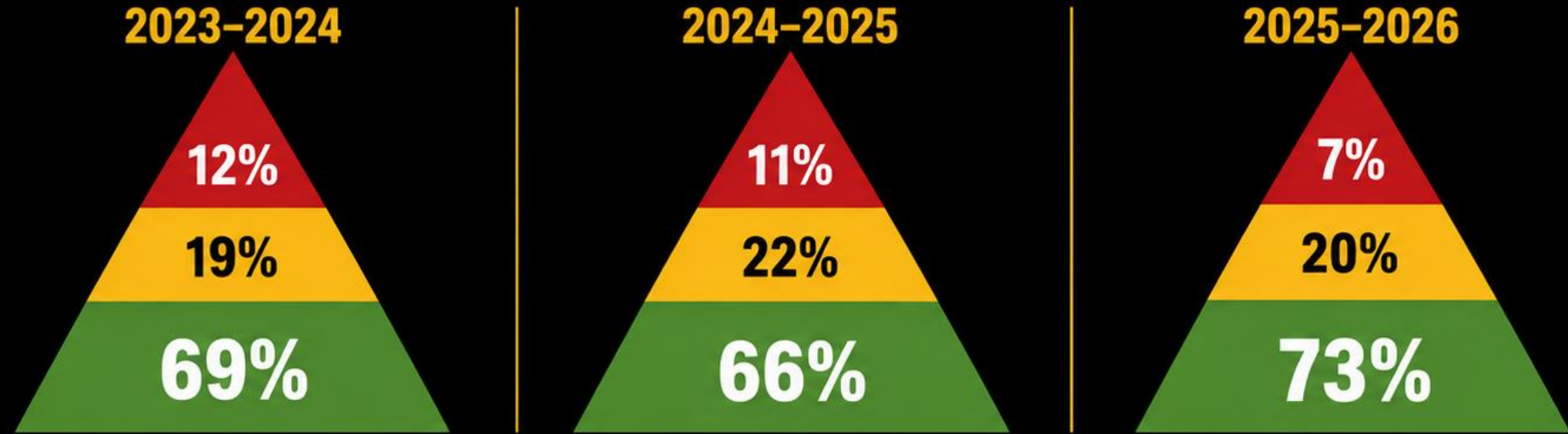



More instructional time.


Less time managing behavior.



MORE STUDENTS MEETING EXPECTATIONS

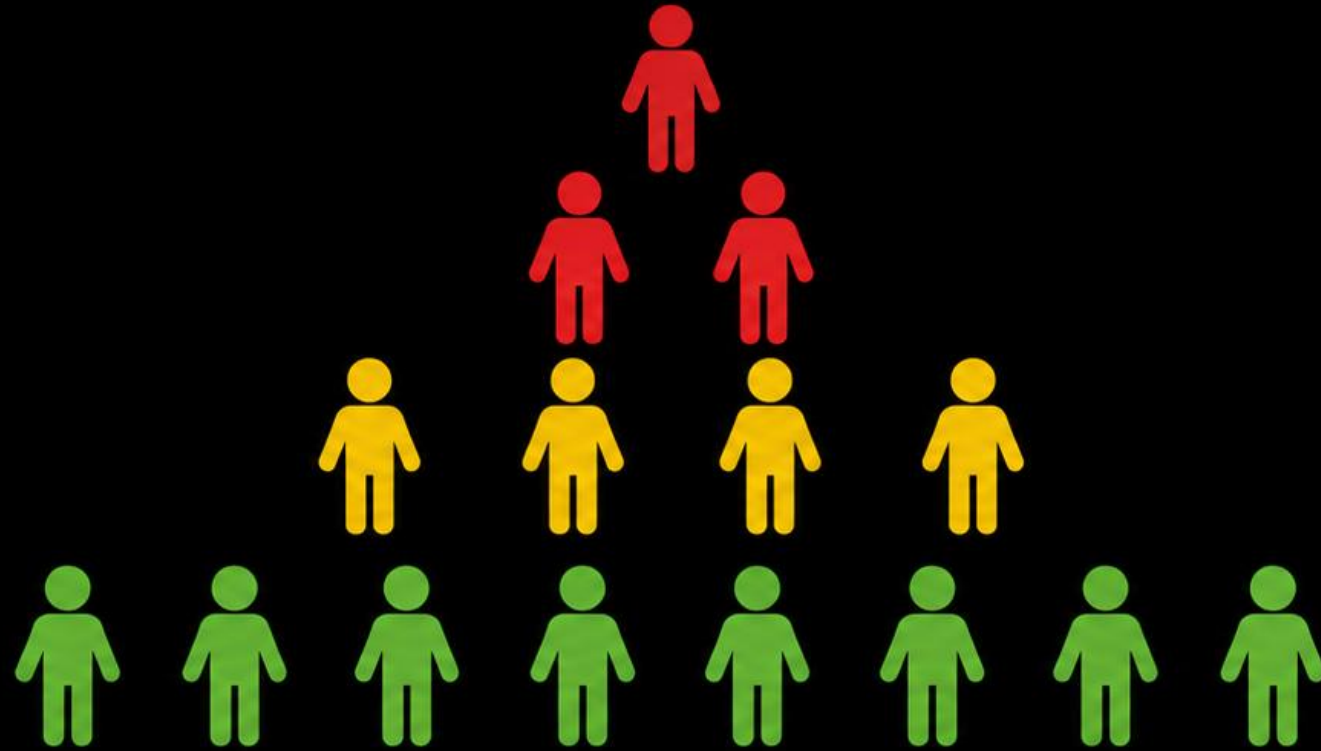


 **73%**
MET EXPECTATIONS
HIGHEST LEVEL IN THE
THREE-YEAR COMPARISON

 **7%**
INTENSIVE SUPPORT
LOWEST LEVEL IN THE
THREE-YEAR COMPARISON

More students succeeded with Tier 1 supports while fewer students required intensive intervention.

GROW THE GREEN



**The greatest gains in student outcomes
come from strengthening Tier 1 supports.**

EVERY AUGUST...

Somebody leaves.

Somebody arrives.

Somebody forgot.

And somebody swears
we've never done PBIS before.

CONSISTENCY IS AN ADULT BEHAVIOR.

QUESTIONS?

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We'd love to continue the conversation.