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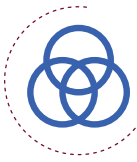
PBIS

Positive Behavioral
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PBIS IMPLEMENTATION IN RURAL SCHOOLS: VOICES FROM THE FIELD

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June 2022

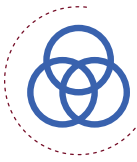


PBIS Implementation in Rural Schools: Voices from the Field

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Purpose

This brief summarizes themes from interviews with seven district- and school-level leaders who were asked to share experiences and lessons learned while implementing PBIS in their rural school(s).



Although common themes were identified across stakeholders, these findings represent the experiences of a small group of implementers and should not be generalized to all rural schools. Rather, these themes offer a starting place for discussion on what is important to consider when implementing PBIS in rural school settings.

Common Themes

- Relationships are essential
- Student, family, and staff involvement is important
- Community collaboration is valuable
- The core features of PBIS look similar
- Implementation adaptations might be necessary
- Implementing in a rural district can be a strength

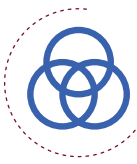
**Overall, some schools are doing it so well...
[they] live and breathe it...you walk on
campus and you know it.**



1 Relationships are Essential

Interviewees agreed that buy-in from district leadership, school administrators, and staff is essential to support PBIS implementation. They shared that existing close relationships often found in rural schools can make it easier to bring key stakeholders together.

**Try to get [the] building on board and in the
same place.**



2 Student, Family, and Staff Involvement is Important

Involving students, families, and school staff can support effective PBIS implementation and build buy-in for the system. However, student and family involvement remains a challenge for many rural schools. One school leader shared that it was a “struggle with getting families in.”

“Everyone matters and has a voice.”

4 The Core Features of PBIS Look Similar

Although implementation of PBIS might have unique strengths and challenges in rural schools, the interviewees shared the same core features of PBIS as can be found in other settings. Rural schools focus on integrating the systems, practices, and data to address outcomes for all of their students.

“PBIS can fill the gaps of what you are working on. It's about every student on your campus.”

3 Community Collaboration is Valuable

Involving the community is important in rural schools, where often “everybody knows everybody.” Some rural implementers needed to address “untruths” about PBIS to ensure that the community had accurate information. One rural school was able to collaborate with a community agency allowing them to acknowledge students using the school point system.

“School spirit is so important to get people engaged.”

5 Implementation Adaptations Might be Necessary

Interviewees identified some challenges to implementation. They noted that they had to be “creative with [incentives]” and that fundraising can be difficult. Rural districts may also have fewer community services available to support students at Tiers 2 and 3. It may be isolating with few opportunities to collaborate and network if no other schools in the area are implementing at the same level.

“Prioritize what can be done.”

“Take it slow.”



6 Implementing in a Rural District can be a Strength

Interviewees emphasized an increased sense of school pride in rural communities that can facilitate the embedding of PBIS in the school's culture. District-level collaboration can also be a strength if district leadership is supportive. Close school relationships can make it easier to involve all staff in implementation and with less staff turnover in some rural schools, implementation can often be sustained.

“...we have a good teacher culture and that rolls down to the students. We build great relationships.”

Additional Resources

[PBIS Implementation in Rural Settings](#) [Video]

[Voices from the Field: PBIS Rural Leaders](#) [Video]

[PBIS Academy Model Demo Brief: Impact of Statewide Support Model on High-Needs Schools](#)

[Building Momentum for PBIS Implementation in High Need Districts](#)

[Adapting PBIS Practices for Rural Settings: The Remote Instruction Strategy Matrix](#)

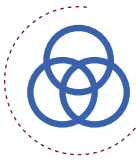
[PBIS in Rural America: Addressing Barriers and Building on Strengths](#)

[Working Smarter, Not Harder in Rural Schools](#)

[Remote Instruction Strategy Matrix for Collaboration with Families](#)

[Is Tier 1 PBIS Feasible and Effective in Rural, High Poverty Secondary Schools?](#)

[Initial Examination of a Model Demonstration](#)



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