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# Exploring the Teacher Perceptions of the Overrepresentation Disciplinary Actions Against African American Male Elementary School Students

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Amber R. Hill

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and that any and all revisions required by
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Walden University
2024

Abstract

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Against African American Male Elementary School Students

by

Amber R. Hill

MA, University of Dayton 2007

BS, Wright State University, 2001

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

P-20 Education (Self-Designed)

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Abstract

Leadership, teachers, and parents have observed significantly disproportionate discipline of African American students at urban elementary schools located in Ohio, despite the implementation of positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS). This basic qualitative study explored teacher perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions amongst African-American male elementary students in a regional school system in Ohio. The conceptual framework for this study was derived from Ladson-Billings' theory of culturally relevant pedagogy and Skinner's operant conditioning, which supports the PBIS framework. The research questions focused on the teachers' perceptions and recommendations about training, resources, and support they need to address the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students. Ten elementary teachers were interviewed. Teachers chosen had some training in implementing PBIS and work in the school district, while the PBIS intervention was implemented. The three primary themes that emerged from the one-on-one conversations after the coding process were training, preparation, and support needs expressed for effectively implementing PBIS and culturally responsive practices, relationship building, and consistency and structure in expectations and consequences. Participants expressed a desire for deeper professional development focused on equitable PBIS and cultural responsiveness. In response, a three-day training was developed incorporating interactive activities, storytelling, videos, and practical strategies. This project has the potential for meaningful social change by empowering educators to dismantle systemic bias and racism by cultivating a meaningful impact on school culture.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to God, my Heavenly Father, who has supported, encouraged, taught, and shown me incredible grace during my doctoral journey. I also dedicate this study to James, my husband, and Jayden, Jabez, Jabari, and Jacobi, our four amazing sons who have been by my side and the source of my strength throughout this journey. I appreciate your prayers, your confidence in me, and your encouragement to complete this journey. Without your steadfast support and the sacrifices, you made, I would not have been able to achieve this blessed milestone. My parents, the late Tasco Williams and Mary Dianne Williams, and my siblings Tasco, Candace, Marie, Sparkle, and Brianna, for the constant push, motivation, and prayers. Lastly, I dedicated this study to all African American male students. Always remember your greatness! Never let anyone steal your greatness and tell you don't matter!! YOU MATTER!

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I want to also acknowledge the family members who passed away while pursuing my doctorate and will not be able to witness me walk across the stage: my Dad Tasco Williams and my best friend, Tiffany Thomas. I appreciate your support, love, and wisdom as I traveled this path. You will forever be in my heart. My forever angels! I want to thank Dr. Cleveland Hayes, my chair. You came on this ride with me at the end of my journey. Thank you for your support, wisdom, and direction. It was a pleasure working with you. May God grant you many blessings. Lastly, I express my gratitude to Dr. Kevin Johnson, my committee member, for all you have done for me. You were a bright light on this difficult journey. You have provided me with the value of perseverance, hard effort, and respect. Your guidance has been quite helpful to me throughout my academic career, and I appreciate it all.

Table of Contents

## List of Tables

Section 1: The Problem

**The Local Problem**

The effect of behavior or discipline on the academic success of African American

males is one of the most challenging issues in our public schools. Schools experience a

variety of behavioral issues from students that can be disruptive to classrooms and

negatively influence students' academic achievement (Noltemeyer et al., 2019). As a

result, teachers often lose valuable instructional time because they are busy contending

with problem behaviors among their students (Freeman et al., 2019; Loman et al., 2018).

Racial disparities also exist in rates of behavioral referrals and other forms of discipline

in U.S. public schools (Scherer & Ingle, 2020). According to Riddick (2021), African

American males are more likely to receive behavioral referrals and more likely to be

suspended or expelled from school than students from other racial and ethnic groups. The

impact of students missing class time impacts their instruction, which may explain why

Black males may not succeed at the same levels as students from other ethnic and racial

backgrounds (Toro & Wang, 2021).

As a result, school district administrators have tried to address disproportionate

behavioral reports and achievement gaps for African American students, particularly

males, by implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is

"a school-wide, data-driven systematic framework that implements multiple tiers of

evidence-based practices to meet the academic, social, and behavioral needs of all

students within a school" (Riddick, 2021, p. 14). However, research results regarding the

effectiveness of PBIS in reducing rates of disciplinary action are mixed, necessitating

further research (Freeman et al., 2019; Noltemeyer et al., 2019). This chapter includes an introduction to the study, the rationale of the problem, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research questions, conceptual framework, nature of the study, definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of this study.

<div align="center">**Rationale**</div>

In this midwestern school district, African American male students are disproportionately disciplined and removed from the classroom through in-school and out-of-school suspension and expulsion. Students who need behavior modification techniques in the classroom could potentially benefit from evidence-based interventions designed to foster good behaviors such as tiered supports. Pas et al. (2019) suggested that the best way to minimize negative behaviors at school is through a combination of positive reinforcements and tiered supports at the classroom or school-wide level. PBIS is a tiered support system characterized by teachers employing positive interventions for student behaviors, and where the objective is to prevent disciplinary actions such as behavior referrals, suspensions, and expulsions (Freeman et al., 2019; Scherer & Ingle, 2020).

Several researchers have found that implementing PBIS with fidelity leads to fewer disciplinary actions because of problem behaviors (Baule, 2020; Freeman et al., 2019; Gage et al., 2020; Loman et al., 2018; Pas et al., 2019). For instance, Baule (2020) investigated the implementation of PBIS and its impact on suspensions in a midsized Midwest urban school district, finding that the implementation had a significant impact on reducing inappropriate student behavior as measured by suspensions. Similarly,

Freeman et al. (2019) examined the relationships between PBIS implementation fidelity and student-level behavior (behavior referrals, suspension), attendance (days absent, tardies), and academic (GPA) outcomes. The researchers found schools that were implementing with higher fidelity had fewer absences, unexcused tardies, behavior referrals, and suspensions, as well some academic gains (Freeman et al., 2019).

However, some researchers found issues associated with the implementation of PBIS, as well as mixed results regarding its efficacy in improving problem behaviors (Gagnon et al., 2020; Goodman-Scott et al., 2018; Thoutenhoofd, 2019). For example, Gagnon et al. (2020) explored whether Title 1 schools had policies and practices that aligned with the core components of PBIS, finding that while most schools identified using a PBIS framework to guide behavioral policies and practices, important features that would signify a comprehensive, coordinated implementation approach were missing. In another study, Thoutenhoofd (2019) critically reviewed the present popularity of PBIS considering a contrary finding; namely, there is no clear evidence of a reduction in youth-related social problems in school-wide PBIS studies. The researcher found that studies reflected a significant epistemic drift in what PBIS is thought to be an answer to, away from social problems, and towards school effectiveness (Thoutenhoofd, 2019).

Bottiani et al. (2018) found a significant racial disparity in the application of out-of-school suspension, even among schools that implemented positive behavior supports; the risk of out-of-school suspension was substantially greater for African American students. Other researchers, including Freeman et al. (2019) and Noltemeyer et al. (2019), agreed that PBIS research has generated mixed results and noted the need for further

research on why PBIS implementation may not result in desired behavioral changes. The focus of this study is on a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S. where, despite the implementation of PBIS, the number of behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students remains persistently high.

## Definition of Terms

*Behavioral referrals*: Behavioral referrals are written reports regarding the occurrence of a witnessed behavior that violates the school's code of conduct (Brandt et al., 2014).

*Negative reinforcement*: Negative reinforcement refers to providing "any stimulus that results in the increased frequency of a response when it is withdrawn" (Culatta, 2022, para. 2).

*Operant conditioning*: The central premise of operant conditioning theory is that learning occurs alongside changes in explicit behavior, and changes in explicit behavior are a consequence of a person's response to environmental stimuli (Culatta, 2022).

*Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS)*: PBIS is "a school-wide, data-driven systematic framework that implements multiple tiers of evidence-based practices to meet the academic, social, and behavioral needs of all students within a school" (Riddick, 2021, p. 14).

*Positive reinforcement*: Positive reinforcement refers to providing a stimulus that results in the increase of a desired behavior when it is given, such as receiving verbal praise (Culatta, 2022).

*Exclusionary discipline*: Exclusionary discipline refers to the removal of a student from the classroom learning environment for disciplinary reasons (Curran, 2016).

*In-school suspension (ISS)*: ISS is a disciplinary action that involves the removal of a student from her or his regular classroom environment and relocation to an alternative setting within the school (Morris & Perry, 2016).

*Out-of-school suspension (OSS)*: OSS is a disciplinary action that involves the removal of a student from the school premises because of displaying inappropriate behaviors (Morris & Perry, 2016).

*At-risk students*: An at-risk student is a student who requires temporary or ongoing intervention to succeed academically (Jiang et al, 2023).

*Culturally relevant pedagogy*: An identified way to integrate strategies into learning objectives and instructional delivery by connecting with student cultures and real-life experiences to construct and solidify their learning (Brown et al., 2020).

## Significance of the Study

Several studies have examined the need to address discipline strategies for African American students. The first study on the disproportionality of African American students in school discipline data was conducted by The Children's Defense Fund in 1975, which was birthed out of the Civil Rights Movement under the leadership of Marian Wright Edelman (Area Superintendent, personal communication, August 2023). Numerous research and books have since been written on the subject, but the issue of disproportionality persists.

This basic qualitative study is significant in that it may provide data that can be examined to analyze teachers' perceptions of the disproportionality of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students. While school districts implement PBIS in the hopes that it will also address the issue of Black students' disproportionality in discipline referral statistics (Baule, 2020). Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) implementation may boost African American male students' opportunities to learn by decreasing the amount of time students miss due to disciplinary difficulties. For PBIS to be successful, teachers are essential in the implementation. As a result, some have claimed that the PBIS framework should place a stronger emphasis on issues of race, racism, stereotyping, and educator prejudice (Bastable et al., 2021). Teachers' perceptions of race, racism, stereotyping, and educator prejudice amongst African American males can have an impact on their implementation of PBIS.  If teachers lack cultural competency, it may lead them to misread students' actions and prompt some of them to write discipline referrals for African American male students, perpetuating a pattern of referral disproportionately based on race.

This study is also significant because all schools in this study are required to submit progress that pertains to the implementation of the PBIS. These schools are seeking possible solutions for the number office referrals that have resulted in suspensions as well as educational initiatives for teachers addressing lost instructional time due to problematic behaviors, which hinder the academic achievement of student learning and maintenance of a safe learning environment. (Administrator, personal communication, August 10, 2022). The findings may identify a gap in practice of

teachers who have challenges in implementing PBIS, and how to best support them as they implement the PBIS framework that can be used for professional development.

This study may also have positive implications for teachers and students in the school district where the research is being conducted. Knowledge of teachers' perceptions of using PBIS strategies may affect the acceptance of more widespread implementation of such proactive and positive practices. Students with challenging behavior problems who attend schools implementing the PBIS framework with fidelity may respond positively to proactive and positive behavioral strategies. Improved teacher management of problematic behaviors and students with improved behaviors will improve the quality of life in classrooms and throughout the school setting.

Finally, if better teacher preparation and professional development can be put in place for PBIS and the implementation at the schools within this study, this could lead to an increase in positive outcomes for African American males throughout their education experience; this could then lead to a significant positive social change toward a better educational system. Research shows students who have a pattern of discipline infractions at the elementary level have higher chances of becoming a high school dropout. McFarland et al., (2019) stated students who drop out of high school are more likely to experience recurrent unemployment and to rely on government help. They are also more likely to cycle in and out of prison than students with a high school education, and their annual income is lower (McFarland et al., 2019). Out of high school, students cite the school atmosphere as a contributing factor. Some of the least prevalent explanations identified are ineffective teachers, mental health concerns, home instability, and being

expelled from school (McFarland et al., 2019). This study will enable teachers to be better equipped and more effective in dealing with African American males, possibly leading to less long-term mental health issues, fewer students getting kicked out of school, decreased prison to pipeline, greater future stability, and more; all of these are positive effects of students being in environments where positive academic achievements can occur.

## Research Question(s)

The purpose of this study was to explore discipline of African American males and teacher perceptions using PBIS in local elementary schools. The following questions allowed for a better understanding of the teacher perceptions using PBIS. The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are teacher perceptions of the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S.?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of training, resources, and supports they need to address the of the disproportionate of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students?

## Summary

Currently, there is a gap in practice, as the results of research on PBIS as a means of addressing behavior problems in schools are mixed (Freeman et al., 2019; Noltemeyer et al., 2019). Freeman et al. (2019) and Noltemeyer et al. (2019) recommended the need for further research on why PBIS implementation may not result in desired behavioral

changes. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore teachers' perceptions regarding why the implementation of PBIS did not lead to improvement in persistently high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students located in a regional school system n a midwestern state in the U.S. This local study site is an example of the national problem.

Despite the use of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), the number of behavioral referrals among African American male students remains persistently high nationally (Gopalan., 2019). Toro & Wang (2021) commented American schools have been shifting away from zero-tolerance policies and encouraging educators' discretion when assigning disciplinary action. Schools are searching for more constructive alternatives that foster a productive and healthy instructional climate without depriving large numbers of students of the opportunity to learn. In 2018, Ohio enacted the Supporting Alternatives for Fair Education (SAFE) Act, House Bill 318, and it is one of the strongest state laws in the country addressing multi-tiered behavioral supports in the interest of reducing disciplinary referrals (Ohio Department of Education, 2020). However, despite PBIS implementation, African American male students in the Midwestern state in the U.S. continue to experience a disproportionate risk of behavioral referrals (Office of Civil Rights, 2018).

The specific problem is that very little is known about why PBIS implementation may not result in desired behavioral changes, particularly among African American male students (Freeman et al., 2019; Noltemeyer et al., 2019). Addressing this gap will contribute to advancing knowledge in the field and provide organizational leaders and

educators with important information in decision-making processes regarding selecting best practices and developing effective strategies to better implement PBIS and foster desired behavioral changes, particularly among African American male elementary students. The purpose of this qualitative research study was to explore teachers' perceptions regarding why the implementation of PBIS did not lead to improvement in persistently high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students at a regional local elementary school district in located in a midwestern state in the U.S.

## Review of the Literature

This first section discussed the problem that motivates this research and identified the specific research gap this study attempts to fill. Next, the methods of searching that yielded the sources in this literature review will be explained. Then, the theoretical foundation for the study will be discussed. This literature review will include relevant studies that will be organized into categories, progressing from the broad subject matter in the existing literature towards the gap to be addressed by this study.

This literature review includes several sections that support a greater understanding of the problem of racial disparities in school discipline among African American male students, along with why PBIS implementation has not resulted in desired behavior changes among this student population, recommendations and solutions for addressing this problem, support for further research on the problem, and support for understanding how this proposed study fits within the greater body of research.

The literature review begins with a description of the theoretical foundation of this study of operant conditioning theory and its application in the literature to PBIS and

the proposed study. Following the study's theoretical foundation are five main sections that cover Racial Disparities in School Discipline, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (CRPBIS), Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Culturally Responsive Practices, and African American Students and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in Ohio. The literature review concludes with a summary of these major relevant themes in the literature and how the gap was established based on the existing literature.

**Literature Search Strategy**

The databases that were used to conduct these searches included ResearchGate, ERIC, Sage Pub, and PubMed. Google and Google Scholar were the search engines used in this study. The search terms included in this study were *Skinner's operant conditioning theory, Racial Disparities in School Discipline, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, school discipline, and African American students, and African American male students, and elementary school students,* and *Ohio.* Relevant studies were generated from database searches using these keywords, both individually and in combination. Those that were deemed relevant to the study were included in the literature review, with 92% of sources within the last 5 years from 2019-2023.

**Conceptual Framework**

The first framework that will support this basic qualitative study is Ladson-Billings' theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. Ladson-Billings' (1995) theory of

culturally relevant pedagogy allows schools to consider the students' home communities' cultures and include these experiences, values, and understandings in the teaching and learning process. Culturally relevant pedagogy supports PBIS in blending PBIS with culturally responsive practices that are sensitive to cultural differences and support the staff, their decision-making, and the academic and social success of their students.

The second framework that will support this qualitative study is Skinner's operant conditioning. Skinner's (1938) operant conditioning theory continues to be one of the most classic approaches used by the behaviorist to explain the complexities of human behavior. Skinner's operant conditioning relies on the environmental conditions and positive reinforcements. Culturally relevant pedagogy and operant conditioning are two of the concepts that support the implementation of PBIS. Operant conditioning theory comprises the theoretical foundation of the proposed study. This theory will be explored in more depth in the current related literature. Then, a rationale for the appropriateness of using these theories as the theoretical foundation for the proposed study will be given based on the findings in the literature.

### *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy*

Culturally relevant pedagogy theory describes how using cultural references to transfer knowledge, skills, and attitudes, culturally responsive education is a paradigm that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings' research found that culturally relevant teaching practices can help students, particularly African American students, achieve greater

academic success, increase engagement with the material, improve attendance, and gain a stronger perception of themselves as capable learners.

Not every student who enrolls in school comes from the same culture; not every school is a monoculture. As a result, teachers may originate from a culture that is very different from that of their pupils, just as the student population is not uniform, which can result in cultural clashes that may cause learning gaps (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2012). To ensure the development of academically significant behaviors in students, educational procedures must be compatible with the culture of the students. It does not imply that all educational methods must be wholly consistent with natal cultural norms, in the sense of matching or agreeing with them precisely or even reasonably closely. The idea behind cultural compatibility is to choose educational program components based on the natal culture to develop and prevent academically undesirable habits (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2012).

### *Operant Conditioning Theory*

Operational conditioning theory is the theoretical foundation for this study. This theory was initially developed by B.F. Skinner in 1948 as operant conditioning theory or behaviorism (Skinner, 1948). Operant conditioning theory, as formulated by Skinner, posits that behavior is learned, reinforcements can be used in the learning process through rewards and punishments for behaviors, and positive reinforcement is more effective than punishment at changing and establishing desirable behavior (Skinner, 1948). When applied to PBIS, the extensive use of operant conditioning theory to better understand the impact of the behavior analysis is most evident in (a) the emphasis on operational

definitions of behavior and intervention elements, (b) the logic model used to select environmental manipulations designed to alter student and staff behavior, and (c) an unrelenting commitment to the measurement of both implementation fidelity and the impact of PBIS on student outcomes, while rewarding students when they achieve the desired appropriate behaviors (Horner & Sugai, 2015).

### *Operant Conditioning Theory and the Literature*

Operant conditioning is the fundamental principle of PBIS (Myers et al., 2020; Thoutenhoofd, 2019). Mondesir and Griffin (2020) suggested that, upon implementing the interventions of PBIS, this theory advocates for the actual measurement of behavior change. Specifically, this measurement of behavior change occurs within a multi-tiered system design of data collection and analysis that includes functional behavior assessment, event recording of specific behaviors, frequency recording of specific behaviors, and time and duration sampling for when and how long specific behaviors occur (Mondesir & Griffin, 2020).

### *Theory Rationale*

The underlying logic for designing and conducting this study is to better understand why the implementation of PBIS did not lead to improvement in persistently high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students at a school district in Columbus, Ohio, by answering the following research questions:

RQ1: What are teachers' perceptions regarding why the implementation of PBIS did not lead to improvement in persistently high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students?

RQ2: What do teachers perceive could be done differently for the PBIS implementation to successfully reduce behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students?

Operant conditioning is the fundamental principle of PBIS (Myers et al., 2020; Thoutenhoofd, 2019). Therefore, this theory also provides an appropriate and useful theoretical foundation for the purpose of this study.

This literature review will begin with a focus on African American students and the racial disparities in school discipline. It will specifically focus on racial disparities in school discipline among African American students as a significant negative outcome for these students, as well as how these disparities are directly related to racial and cultural biases within the public-school system and larger community to a national level. The next section will include an in-depth exploration of positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) in the current literature. Then, the section culturally responsive behavior interventions and supports (CRPBIS) will include the current literature on how effective adding the component of cultural responsiveness to PBIS is in fostering student success. Then, the section positive behavior interventions and supports, culturally responsive practices, and African American students will more specifically focus on African American students and compare PBIS with CRBIS in its effectiveness with fostering success among this student population. The last section, positive behavior interventions and supports in Ohio, will most specifically examine any existing literature on the implementation of PBIS and culturally responsive practices within this state to address racial disparities in school discipline among African American students.

*African American Student Focus*

Multiple studies in the current literature explored the impact of PBIS on improving the school discipline gap among African American student students. Baule (2020) specifically investigated the impact of PBIS for reducing racial disparities of suspensions in an urban school district and found that while PBIS was effective overall for reducing inappropriate student behaviors, PBIS alone did not significantly reduce the racial disparity in suspensions among White students and African American students. McIntosh et al. (2021) also examined the use of PBIS to reduce racial disparities in the discipline gap among African American and White students and concurred that PBIS could only be effective in doing so if it became more equity-focused. The findings of Baule (2020) and McIntosh et al. (2021) both concurred that PBIS alone was not effective in improving the school discipline gap among African American students.

Other researchers focused on school wide positive behavior interventions and supports (SWPBIS) that were designed to be more comprehensive regarding their impact on improving the school discipline gap among African American students. Barclay et al. (2021) examined SWPBIS for reducing racial disparities in discipline and found that higher fidelity to SWPBIS classroom systems was related to lower discipline risk for all students, but not more equitable discipline practices. Johnson et al. (2018) explored SWPBIS among African American students to help address the school discipline gap and determined that although SWPBIS has suggested implementation strategies must be culturally neutral in order to be appropriate in all schools, African American students continued to be overdisciplined when compared to their White peers, even when

SWPBIS was implemented with sufficient fidelity; thus, a culturally responsive adaptation of SWPBIS was necessary. Heidelberg et al. (2022b) analyzed the implementation of SWPBIS to address the school discipline gap among African American students in urban schools and concurred that SWPBIS could only become more effective to address this gap if it became more culturally responsive. Ya-yu et al. (2021) also investigated racial disparities in the discipline gap among African American and White students and further concurred that this gap could only be better addressed with SWPBIS if policies and practices became more culturally responsive. Consensus was therefore found that SWPIS alone was also not effective in improving the school discipline gap among African American students, particularly unless it became more culturally responsive (Barclay et al., 2021; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; Ya-yu et al., 2021).

A few studies in the current literature focused research specifically on the school environment or the effectiveness of certain PBIS interventions for fostering the success of African American students. Heidelberg et al. (2022a) investigated the school safety of African American students and determined that for African American students, the school environment was often physically and emotionally unsafe, and they were targeted by policies and practices that ultimately produced inequitable outcomes. These researchers further determined that school safety must be reexamined and reconceptualized to promote a safe, secure, and welcoming environment for African American students that encouraged more culturally responsive practices. These findings of Heidelberg et al. (2022a) regarding the impact of the school environment on fostering African American

student success support previous findings in this section of the inequitable outcomes of school discipline policies and practices that PBIS did not effectively address (Baule, 2020; McIntosh et al., 2021), as well as the need for more culturally responsive practices within SWPBIS (Barclay et al., 2021; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; Ya-yu et al., 2021).

Two studies examined PBIS interventions that were more culturally responsive among African American students. Same et al. (2018) completed a systematic review of culturally responsive evidence-based interventions that were found to be most effective to improve African American student success and determined that the interventions of mentoring or coaching, parental involvement, and positive student-teacher relationships were the most effective. Cook et al. (2018) examined the efficacy of GREET–STOP–PROMPT (GSP) as a low-cost, potentially high-yield, culturally responsive intervention to address racial disparities in school discipline among African American male students, finding that the likelihood of these students receiving an office referral was cut by two-thirds following implementation of the GSP strategy, and African American male students' self-reported school connections significantly improved from pre- to post intervention. Both the findings of Same et al. (2018) and Cook et al. (2018) indicated that culturally responsive interventions were effective for specifically fostering African American student success.

Other researchers explored the relationship between teacher expectations or student perceptions and the school discipline gap among African American students. Santiago-Rosario et al. (2021) examined the association between teacher expectations

and racial disproportionality in discipline referrals among African American students and found that cultural bias and a lack of culturally responsive interventions among teachers was a significant factor in the disproportionality of referrals. These findings pertaining to the interaction of teacher expectations and the school discipline gap among African American students add further support to previous findings that PBIS alone without culturally responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline among African American students (Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021). Larson et al. (2019) investigated school-level discipline disproportionality among African American students and observed classroom-level PBIS in relation to student perceptions of the school disciplinary environment and found that students perceived the disciplinary environment as significantly less favorable in schools with greater racial discipline disproportionality, indicating that students were aware of the school discipline gap among African American students and perceived this inequitable impact on the school discipline environment very negatively.

Two studies were found that investigated the effectiveness of PBIS, counseling, and CRBIS among African American male elementary students as most related to the proposed study. Buckley (2019) explored the influence of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior resulting in office referrals among African American male elementary students and found that participation in PBIS or mentoring was not a significant factor for improving disruptive behavior, but counseling was. Graves et al. (2017) examined the effectiveness of CRBIS for improving African

American male student success at the elementary level by adapting the curriculum to emphasize more culturally relevant and inclusive themes and found this CRBIS method was effective for reducing negative, disruptive, and aggressive behavior among these students that would have led to disciplinary referrals. The findings of both Buckley (2019) and Graves et al. (2017) specific to African American male elementary students add further support to previous broader consensus that PBIS alone without culturally responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline among African American students (Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021).

*Summary*

The first main section of this literature review examined the impact of PBIS on improving the school discipline gap among African American students. Further support was found specific to African American students that PBIS alone without culturally responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline (Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Buckley, 2019; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021). Culturally responsive practices that were recognized in the literature for being the most successful among African American students were mentoring or coaching, counseling, parental involvement, building positive student-teacher relationships, adapting the curriculum to emphasize more culturally relevant themes, and fostering a more safe and inclusive connection with the school

environment (Buckley, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Same et al., 2018). However, by contrast, teacher expectations for student behavior that were culturally biased and the general awareness of students that the school discipline environment was inequitable were significant factors that negatively interacted with the school discipline gap among African American students (Larson et al., 2019; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021). The next main section Racial Disparities in School Discipline will examine this issue of racial disparities in school discipline with a specific focus on African American students and how these disparities are directly related to racial and cultural biases within the public-school system and larger community to a national level.

**Racial Disparities in School Discipline**

As previously established, PBIS alone without culturally responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline among African American students (Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Buckley, 2019; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021). Further support was found specific to African American students that these racial disparities in school discipline significantly impacted their success in school and life in negative ways and were related to cultural and racial biases (Amemiya et al., 2020; Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Fadus et al., 2021; Girvan, 2019; Girvan et al., 2021; Goins et al., 2021; Gregory et al., 2018; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Riddle & Sinclair, 2019; Sabol et al., 2022). These cultural and racial biases in school discipline were also

recognized to exist from the national to the local community level (Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Girvan et al., 2021; Goins et al., 2021; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Riddle & Sinclair, 2019).

Multiple studies examined racial disparities in school discipline that negatively impacted African American students that were recognized to exist from the national to the community level. Goins et al. (2021) researched racial disparities within the entire

U. S. public school system among African American students and determined that there were significant negative impacts and racial disparities related to school discipline and overall student success among this population. Ksinan et al. (2019) conducted a contextual analysis of racial disparities in school discipline among U.S. middle schools and high schools and concurred that there were ethnic and racial disparities in school discipline on a national level that negative impacted African American students. These researchers further determined that students from smaller schools were at greater risk for disproportionate disciplinary measures, and Midwestern schools had significantly higher rates for the most racially disproportionate disciplinary measures as compared to Southern schools. A systematic review on the topic of racial disparities in school discipline concurred that there were racial disparities in school discipline on a national level, particularly pertaining to school suspensions and expulsions, that negatively impacted African American students, and further determined that differential treatment and supports accounted for 46 percent of the school discipline gap in suspensions and expulsions among African American and White students, while between-school sorting accounted for 21 percent of this school discipline gap (Owens & McLanahan, 2020).

However, Bottiani et al. (2017) examined racial disparities in high school discipline among African American and White male students, and while supporting the broader consensus by finding that the number of behavioral referrals among African American male students remained persistently high on a national level, these researchers also found that school-level discipline gaps were associated with African American male students' perceptions of less school equity, less school belonging, and increased adjustment problems, even when accounting for school-level contextual factors such as socioeconomic status, student diversity, and overall suspension rates.

These contrasting findings of Owens and McLanahan (2020) and Bottiani et al. (2017) indicated differing factors that contributed the most significantly to racial disparities in school discipline that negatively impacted African American students, with Owens and McLanahan (2020) emphasizing differential treatment and supports and between-school sorting, while Bottiani et al. (2017) emphasized perceptions of less school equity, less school belonging, and increased adjustment problems. These contrasting findings may be explained by Owens and McLanahan (2020) conducting a broader systematic review that focused on all African American students, while Bottiani et al. (2017) focused research specifically on African American male students. Implications may suggest a clear link though between experiencing differential treatment and supports as Owens and McLanahan (2020) found and perceptions of less school equity, less school belonging, and increased adjustment problems as Bottiani et al. (2017) found that may apply to the broader African American student population as well.

One other study that examined racial disparities in school discipline that negatively impacted African American high school students into early adulthood life success added further support that these disparities existed at a national level (Davison et al., 2022). These researchers further determined by specifically analyzing links between high school discipline and important young adult outcomes related to criminal justice contact, social safety net program participation, postsecondary education, and the labor market that that approximately 30% of the inequity in young adult criminal justice outcomes, SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) receipt, and college completion could be traced back to racial disparities in school discipline. Broad consensus was found among all of these studies that racial disparities in school discipline negatively impacting African American students existed at a national level (Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Goins et al., 2021; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020).

Additional studies examined racial disparities in school discipline at the county or community level or within specific types of school discipline. Riddle and Sinclair (2019) analyzed data from the Implicit Project that found that African American students were more likely to be seen as problematic and more likely to be punished than White students for the same offense and further determined that racial disparities in school-based discipline were associated with county-level rates of racial bias. Girvan et al. (2021) specifically examined the extent to which disparities in African American and White students' risks of receiving office discipline referrals (ODRs) and out-of-school suspensions (OSS) were related to differences in implicit and explicit racial and cultural

biases assessed at the community level across the U.S. and found that there was a

significant relationship between community-level racial and cultural biases and racial

disparities in ODRs and OSSs in schools. Both the findings of Riddle and Sinclair (2019)

and Girvan et al. (2021) also recognized in the current literature that there were racial

disparities in school discipline that negatively impacted African American students at the

county and community level, with Girvan et al. (2021) also finding that these disparities

were related to racial and cultural biases. A related study that examined racial disparities

in school discipline among elementary students found that African American students

had up to 3.5 times greater odds of receiving a detention or out-of-school suspension than

White students (Fadus et al. 2021). Another related study that examined discipline

records for one academic year in an urban school district to identify the factors associated

with racially equitable assignment of out-of-school suspension (OSS) found that student

participation in restorative interventions could substantially reduce the odds that

individual students received OSS, but only marginally for African American students

when compared to their White peers (Gregory et al., 2018). The findings of both Fadus et

al. (2021) and Gregory et al. (2018) add specific support to the findings of Girvan et al.

(2021) that there were racial disparities in out-of-school suspensions.

Other studies examined significant factors that may also contribute to racial

disparities in school discipline among African American students. Girvan (2019)

explored these racial disparities among African American students and determined that

racial differences in student behaviors were the result of poverty, stress, identification

with certain social groups, and culture, and teacher and administrator decisions were

racially and culturally biased by the interactions between explicit or implicit attitudes and beliefs and discipline policies and practices. These findings of Girvan (2019) add further support to the findings of Girvan et al. (2021) that there was a significant relationship between community-level racial and cultural biases and racial disparities in ODRs and OSSs in schools and further indicated that poverty, stress, identification with certain social groups, and culture were also significant factors that contributed to racial disparities in school discipline among African American students. A related study that examined school discipline among preschool students found that there were significant racial and socio-economic disparities in discipline that negatively impacted African American and poorer students (Sabol et al., 2022). The findings of Sabol et al. (2022) add further support to the findings of Girvan et al. (2021) that poverty was a significant factor in racial disparities in school discipline among African American students. Amemiya et al. (2020) examined the impact of school discipline for minor infractions and found that school discipline for minor misconduct could escalate defiant behaviors among middle and high school students and further contribute to racial disparities, indicating that African American students may be more at risk for being disciplined for minor infractions that may also escalate defiant behaviors.

*Section Summary*

The second main section of this literature review examined racial disparities in school discipline specifically among African American students as related to the focus of the proposed study. Further support was found specific to African American students that racial disparities in school discipline significantly impacted their success in school and

life in negative ways and were related to cultural and racial biases (Amemiya et al., 2020;

Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Fadus et al., 2021; Girvan, 2019; Girvan et al.,

2021; Goins et al., 2021; Gregory et al., 2018; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan,

2020; Riddle & Sinclair, 2019; Sabol et al., 2022). These cultural and racial biases in

school discipline were also recognized to exist from the national to the local community

level (Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Girvan et al., 2021; Goins et al., 2021;

Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Riddle & Sinclair, 2019). The most

prevalent type of school discipline that was recognized in the current literature with

consensus as negatively impacting African American students was out-of-school

suspensions (Fadus et al., 2021; Girvan et al., 2021; Gregory et al., 2018). Specific

factors that were further noted in the literature that significantly contributed to racial

disparities in school discipline among African American students included differential

treatment and supports, between-school sorting, perceptions of less school equity, less

school belonging, increased adjustment problems, poverty, stress, identification with

certain social groups and cultures, and being overly disciplined for minor infractions

(Amemiya et al., 2020; Bottiani et al., 2017; Girvan et al., 2021; Owens & McLanahan,

2020; Sabol et al., 2022). The next major section of Positive Behavior Interventions and

Supports will examine any existing literature on the implementation of PBIS.

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports**

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) has been defined as an

evidence-based three-tiered framework to improve student behavior, a written plan that is

developed and tailored specifically to an individual student, and the aim to foster student

success through prevention rather than punishment (Gage et al., 2020a). This movement towards preventative rather than punitive strategies to manage and improve student behavior began over approximately the past two decades and has been considered as an opposing response to reactive zero tolerance policies that were most popularized during the 1990s and often resulted in large numbers of students being deprived of the opportunity to learn by not being able to stay in school (Skiba & Losen, 2016). Durr (2019), noted Zero-tolerance policies have evolved to punish students harshly for minor infractions like tardiness, absenteeism, smoking, and teacher disrespect. While the policy was designed to reduce disruptive conduct and increase school safety, there was significant disagreement about whether this was accomplished.

With the use of zero- tolerance policies and the excessive use of suspension and expulsion in schools' students and communities are harmed in numerous ways. Many of the punishments administered by the schools such as corporal punishment, suspensions, and expulsions turn into risks for referrals to the juvenile justice system (Thomas, 2021). Children who are suspended frequently have to stay at home alone without supervision, which increases the likelihood that they will engage in behavior that will land them in the juvenile justice system or make them the victims of crime. To combat this phenom, Ohio school districts has adopted the PBIS framework in their discipline plan. PBIS has been recognized overall in the current literature as being an effective strategy for managing student behavior and supporting student success (Ennis et al., 2018; Gage et al., 2020a; Gage et al., 2020b; Goodman-Scott et al., 2018; Loman et al., 2018; Pas et al., 2019; Sprauge et al., 2020). However, concerns were noted regarding the comprehensiveness

and consistency of implementation (Bastable et al., 2021; Bastable et al., 2020; Floress et al., 2022; Freeman et al., 2019; Gagnon et al., 2018; Gagnon et al., 2020; Goodman-Scott et al., 2021; Klingbeil et al., 2019; Kittelman et al. 2020; Nese et al., 2019; Nese et al., 2021; Noltemeyer et al., 2018a; OHandley et al., 2022; Scaletta & Tejero Hughes, 2021). PBIS was found as well to be effective overall for managing elementary school student behavior, with concerns also expressed about the comprehensiveness and consistency of implementation (Fefer et al., 2020; Kelly et al., 2022; Marklez et al., 2022; McNiff et al., 2019; Steed et al., 2022; Sutherland et al., 2020).

### *The Effectiveness of PBIS*

Multiple studies examined the effectiveness of PBIS in the current literature. Gage et al. (2020a) conducted a literature review of PBIS and determined that PBIS could reduce school suspensions. These researchers conducted another study that examined the effect of school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports (SWPBIS) on disciplinary exclusions in California and found that schools implementing SWPBIS with high fidelity had significantly fewer suspensions (Gage et al., 2020b). Two other studies provided additional consensus that SWPIS could significantly decrease school suspensions. Pas et al. (2019) examined the effects of SWPIS and also found that secondary schools implementing SWPBIS had statistically significant lower suspensions during the second and third years after implementation. Loman et al. (2018) explored the effectiveness of SWPBIS specifically among students with severe disabilities and found that all participants improved as evidenced by a reduction in the duration of their problem behavior in schoolwide settings.

Other studies focused research on behavior specific praise as a key component of PBIS and its effectiveness. Ennis et al. (2018) researched behavior specific praise used by middle school teachers to reinforce appropriate behavior of students in the classroom through observing particular student behavior and complimenting the student for the appropriate response, with the intent that students will continue to engage in the appropriate behavior, and found that this PBIS strategy was effective and efficient for supporting student success. However, Moore et al. (2019) completed a systematic review of the use by teachers of behavior specific praise in K-12 public schools and determined that there was currently insufficient evidence to identify teacher praise as an evidence-based practice for students. This apparent discrepancy between the findings of Ennis et al. (2018) and Moore et al. (2019) may be explained by Moore et al. (2019) completing a systematic review across a much larger spectrum, while the research of Ennis et al. (2018) was more limited. Other researchers added further support to the findings of Ennis et al. (2018) by developing and assessing the Behavior-Specific Praise–Observation Tool (BSP-OT) to measure characteristics of effective praise as a component of PBIS and determined that this tool was highly reliable (Markelz et al., 2020). Therefore, greater consensus was found in the current literature that behavior specific praise was an effective component of PBIS (Ennis et al., 2018; Markelz et al., 2020).

A few additional studies explored the effectiveness of PBIS in an alternative setting or from the perspective of school staff or students. Sprague et al. (2020) assessed the fidelity, feasibility, and social validity of PBIS in a repeated-measures evaluation study across 50 secure juvenile facilities and found that all participating facilities were

able to achieve acceptable PBIS implementation fidelity, and staff members reported gains in sense of efficacy in their roles. The findings of Sprague et al. (2020) lend additional support to the effectiveness of PBIS, even within an alternative setting of juvenile facilities. Goodman-Scott et. al (2018) examined the role of school counselors for implementing PBIS in an urban middle school and found that there were positive school outcomes and the emergence of five themes: the importance of administrative leadership, proactive PBIS practices, creating consistency, building community, and school counselor integration. A related qualitative study of middle school students' perceptions of PBIS found that although middle school students' understanding of PBIS was often focused on their acknowledgment system, students identified a range of impacts beyond improving student behavior, expressed a desire for more transparent communication between staff and students, and more opportunities for students to be actively involved in their school's program (Lloyd et al., 2022). The findings of both Goodman-Scott et al. (2018) and Lloyd et al. (2022) lend additional support to the findings of Ennis et al. (2018) of the overall effective of PBIS in middle schools. The findings of Goodman-Scott et. al (2018) also emphasize the need to create consistency in PBIS implementation that will be explored more in depth in the next section.

***Concerns about Lack of Comprehensiveness and Consistency in PBIS Implementation***

Multiple studies were found in the current literature that examined the comprehensiveness and consistency of PBIS implementation from a broad perspective. Gagnon et al. (2020) examined whether Title 1 schools had policies and practices that aligned with the core components of PBIS and found that while most schools identified

using a PBIS framework to guide behavioral policies and practices, important features that would signify a comprehensive, coordinated implementation approach were missing. Gagnon et al. (2018) specifically explored the extent and consistency of PBIS implementation efforts in secure juvenile justice schools in an earlier study and found that while 84% of respondents identified alignment with a multitiered framework for behavioral supports, this multitiered framework was not comprehensive or consistent for youth with more serious behavioral needs, with fewer supports available at Tiers 2 and 3. In a related study, Nese et al. (2021) examined teaming and Tier 2 and 3 practices in PBIS implementation and found that there was considerable variation and lack of consistency among team configurations, and more research was needed to better understand the various teaming configurations, structures, and practices commonly used by PBIS teams in typical schools, particularly at these advanced tiers. Nese et al. (2019) specifically examined Tier 1 of SWPBIS in schools and also found that there was a lack of consistency with implementation at this tier as well, and adequate implementation may depend on team structures and consistency. Noltemeyer et al. (2018a) conducted a systematic review of SWPBIS research and concurred in part with the findings of Nese et al. (2019) that the effectiveness of SWPBIS was not consistent. Consensus was found among all of these researchers from a broad perspective that PBIS implementation lacked comprehensiveness and consistency (Gagnon et al., 2020; Gagnon et al., 2018; Nese et al., 2021; Nese et al., 2019; Noltemeyer et al, 2018a).

Other researchers examined specific factors that may contribute to a lack of comprehensiveness and consistency in PBIS implementation that may also negatively

impact its effectiveness. Klingbeil et al. (2019) conducted a systematic review of the check-in/check-out component of PBIS and determined that this functional component of PBIS could be improved in the comprehensiveness of its implementation. Floress et al. (2022) explored secondary school teachers' use of praise or reprimands and found a lack of consistency in implementation between their perceived and actual use of praise. Furthermore, the statistical results from this study indicated that teachers used more general praise than behavior-specific praise and more mild reprimands than any other reprimand type. O'Handley et al. (2022) also examined secondary teachers' use of praise and concurred that there was a lack of consistency of implementation based on the rates of praise given to students, with teachers who praised every two minutes having more effective improvements in student behavior than those who praised every four minutes or longer. More specific consensus was found pertaining to particular components of PBIS of areas where PBIS may lack comprehensiveness and consistency pertaining to check-in/check-out and praising students for desired behaviors (Floress et al., 2022; Klingbeil et al., 2019; O'Handley et al., 2022).

A few studies explored the perspectives of educators and other school staff that may contribute to a lack of comprehensiveness and consistency in PBIS implementation. Bastable et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative study to explore educators' experiences implementing an equity-focused PBIS and found that these educators identified 14 helping categories, four hindering categories, and four categories of what could have made implementing the intervention easier and more effective. Bastable et al. (2020) conducted a related qualitative study of educators' perceptions of coaching activities

related to Tier 1 of SWPBIS implementation and found that coaching was effective in helping educators' with SWPBIS implementation, but there was still a lack of consistency in overall implementation. Kittelman et al. (2020) examined variables related to the abandonment or readoption of SWPBIS that negatively impacted comprehensive and consistent implementation and found that the most common reason for abandonment was lack of staff support and the most common reason for readoption was a new administrator being hired. Scaletta and Tejero Hughes (2021) more specifically explored efforts by school administrators and leaders to sustain PBIS implementation and concurred in part that staff must buy-in to the process in order for there to be consistent implementation. Further specific consensus was found that a significant factor in the comprehensive and consistent implementation of PBIS was related to educators and school staff themselves who may not do so because of a lack of adequate training or a lack of support for PBIS (Bastable et al., 2021; Bastable et al., 2020; Kittelman et al, 2020; Scaletta & Tejero Hughes, 2021).

Other researchers also examined specific factors that may contribute to a lack of comprehensiveness and consistency in PBIS implementation that may impact its effectiveness. Although Goodman-Scott et al. found in their 2018 study that school counselors could help foster positive and effective outcomes of PBIS implementation, a more recent study in 2021 that examined whether schools and communities had comprehensive, consistent, and equitable access to PBIS based on sociodemographic school and community variables found that both suburban and rural schools with higher median household incomes were more likely to have PBIS and schools with a higher

number of White students (Goodman-Scott et al., 2021). A related study that also included the impact of sociodemographic variables when examining the relationships between PBIS implementation fidelity and student-level behavior, suspensions, and attendance found that schools that were implementing with higher fidelity had fewer absences, unexcused tardies, and suspensions overall (Freeman et al., 2019). However, there were mixed outcomes in these findings when accounting for sociodemographic variables, with less effectiveness found among African American male students in reducing undesirable student-level behaviors, suspensions, or improving attendance (Freeman et al., 2019). Both the findings of Goodman-Scott et al. (2021) and Freeman et al. (2019) indicated that sociodemographic variables may be a significant factor that negatively interacts with the effectiveness of PBIS due to a lack of comprehensiveness and consistency of implementation among all student populations.

### *The Effectiveness of PBIS in Elementary Schools*

A few studies were found in the current literature that specifically focused on the effectiveness of PBIS in elementary schools as most pertinent to the proposed study. Fefer et al. (2020) examined the effects of positive parent contact and praise in the PBIS process on elementary students and found increased on-task behavior based on observations conducted during challenging classroom routines. Sutherland et al. (2020) evaluated the effectiveness of BEST in CLASS--Elementary (BEST in CLASS-E), a Tier 2 intervention delivered by teachers for student problem behavior, teacher-student relationships, and classroom quality, and found that this intervention decreased teacher-reported student problem behavior and increase teacher-student closeness through

positive praise. Another related study examined the effects of varied and non-varied behavior-specific praise on first-grade students' on-task behaviors and found that both varied and non-varied behavior-specific praise increased on-task behavior (Markelz et al., 2022). The results from these studies in elementary schools on the use of praise as a specific component of PBIS build support for previous consensus that positive praise was an effective component of PBIS (Ennis et al., 2018; Markelz et al., 2020). One other study that focused on determining the effectiveness of the PBIS intervention of group video self-modeling to improve the speed with which students in an elementary classroom lined up and transitioned from one activity to another and found that this intervention produced immediate gains in the speed with which the average performance of the three groups of students lined up and transitioned (McNiff et al., 2019). From broad consensus then, additional support was also found among these findings specific to elementary schools that PBIS was effective for managing student behavior and supporting student success (Fefer et al., 2020; Marklez et al., 2022; McNiff et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2020).

However, a few researchers expressed concerns with the comprehensiveness and consistency of PBIS within elementary schools. Kelly et al. (2022) researched the role of coaching in PBIS and found that while this component was effective, particularly for providing individual supports in elementary schools, there was also wide variability and a lack of comprehensive and consistency in coaching practices for those receiving coaching, in addition to a disparity between ideal coaching as described in the literature and actual coaching practices in elementary schools. Steed et al. (2022) explored the role

of early childhood educators in transitioning students in an elementary school through

PBIS and found that these educators were generally supported, but when they did not feel

included or felt that their perspectives were being validated by school staff on what PBIS

practices were appropriate for their students, they used a different social emotional

approach that was not consistent with the general practice or implementation of PBIS

within the elementary school. Both the findings of Kelly et al. (2022) and Steed et al.

(2022) indicated that there could be a lack of comprehensiveness and consistency with

PBIS implementation at the elementary school level that may negatively impact its

effectiveness.

*Summary*

The third section of this literature review explored Positive Behavior

Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in the current literature. Consensus was found that

PBIS was an effective strategy for managing student behavior and supporting student

success (Ennis et al., 2018; Gage et al., 2020a; Gage et al., 2020b; Goodman-Scott et al.,

2018; Loman et al., 2018; Pas et al., 2019; Sprauge et al., 2020). However, consensus

was also found in the current literature that there was a lack of comprehensiveness and

consistency with PBIS implementation that may negatively impact its effectiveness

(Bastable et al., 2021; Bastable et al., 2020; Floress et al., 2022; Freeman et al., 2019;

Gagnon et al., 2018; Gagnon et al., 2020; Goodman-Scott et al., 2021; Klingbeil et al.,

2019; Kittelman et al. 2020; Nese et al., 2019; Nese et al., 2021; Noltemeyer et al.,

2018a; OHandley et al., 2022; Scaletta & Tejero Hughes, 2021). These concerns about a

lack of comprehensiveness or consistency were more specifically noted as being

particular components of PBIS pertaining to check-in/check-out and praising students for desired behaviors (Floress et al., 2022; Klingbeil et al., 2019; O'Handley et al., 2022), a lack of adequate training or a lack of support for PBIS among educators and school staff, (Bastable et al., 2021; Bastable et al., 2020; Kittelman et al, 2020; Scaletta & Tejero Hughes, 2021), and sociodemographic variables (Freeman et al., 2019; Goodman-Scott et al., 2021). A focus on the effectiveness of PBIS in elementary schools as most pertinent to the proposed study also revealed further support that PBIS was effective for managing student behavior and supporting student success (Fefer et al., 2020; Marklez et al., 2022; McNiff et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2020). Concerns were also expressed though about a lack of comprehensiveness or consistency with implementation regarding coaching practices and a lack of staff support (Kelly et al., 2022; Steed et al., 2022). The next major section will explore Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (CRPBIS) in the current literature.

**Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports**

Ladson-Billings' (1995) theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy allows schools to consider the students' home communities' cultures and include these experiences, values, and understandings in the teaching and learning process. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy supports PBIS in blending PBIS with culturally responsive practices that are sensitive to cultural differences and support the staff, their decision-making, and the academic and social success of their students. Ladson-Billings research found that culturally relevant teaching practices can help students, particularly African American students achieve greater academic success, increase engagement with the material,

improve attendance, and a stronger perception of themselves as capable learners. Culturally appropriate teaching practices allow teachers to engage students in learning, reducing behavior opportunities and enhancing students' feelings of worth (Krawczyk, 2020).

Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (CRPBIS) has been defined as initiatives that were created to more adequately address cultural and racial biases in PBIS implementation (Bal, 2018). CRPBIS was recognized as being most effective for helping to reduce cultural and racial disparities within PBIS as related to school discipline and behavior management by its emphasis on how cultural and racial bias interacts with students and families from different cultural and racial backgrounds, the need for more parental involvement, and the need for more culturally and racially sensitive two-way communication with families (Bal, 2018; Gadd & Butler, 2019; Kulkarni et al., 2019; Nayir, 2022; Noltemeyer et al., 2018b). However, CRBIS was also noted to lack comprehensiveness and consistency with implementation (Bottiani et al., 2018; Gaias et al., 2019).

### The Effectiveness of CRPBIS

Multiple studies examined the effectiveness of CRPBIS in the current literature. Bal (2018) conducted a literature review of culturally responsive positive behavioral interventions and supports and determined that CRPBIS promoted positive social behaviors among students and supported students' learning, engagement, and need for safety, belonging, and affirmative identification. Noltemeyer et al. (2018b) also reviewed CRPBIS and concurred in part that culturally responsive practices of PBIS were

absolutely essential to make PBIS most effective, especially at Tier 1, as a preventative approach to the escalation of negative behaviors, and data should be analyzed to reflect any racial disparities in discipline. Another review of CRPBIS further concurred that CRPBIS was effective for fostering greater student success and determined that some of the most effective practices were facilitating parental involvement, learning about students' home cultures, and valuing and including them in classroom activities (Gadd & Butler, 2019). Therefore, the findings of these studies concurred that CRPBIS was effective in fostering greater student success (Bal, 2018; Gadd & Butler, 2019; Noltemeyer et al., 2018b).

Other researchers focused on the role of teachers and school staff in the effective implementation of CRPBIS. Nayir (2022) explored best practices for creating a more culturally responsive classroom and found in order to effectively implement CRPBIS, teachers must question themselves and examine how their cultural background influences their preferences, lifestyles and behaviors, particularly towards disciplining students from different cultural backgrounds, and in order to understand the culture of students, teachers must reach out to their families in a two-way communication style of being respectful and sensitive to any cultural differences. Nayir (2022) further recognized that teachers must also then plan inclusive classroom activities and group work that recognizes cultural differences among students. The findings of Nayir (2022) add support to the previous findings of Gadd and Butler (2019) that some of the most effective practices of CRBIS were facilitating parental involvement, learning about students' home cultures, and valuing and including them in classroom activities. Kulkarni et al. (2019) conducted a

self-study of teachers who learned to more effectively implement CRPBIS and found that doing so also increased their effectiveness with minimizing behavioral and discipline challenges among their students. These findings of Kulkarni et al. (2019) provide additional support to the findings of both Bal (2018) and Noltemeyer et al. (2018b) that CRPBIS was effective for promoting positive social behaviors and minimizing the escalation of negative behaviors. One other study that specifically focused on teacher coaching and training to more effectively implement CRPBIS found that teachers generally supported CRPBIS with additional coaching (Kranski & Steed, 2022), and concurred with Kulkarni et al. (2019) in part of the need to ensure that teachers have learned and been trained to effectively implement CRPBIS. Consensus was also found specific to the role of teachers in the effective implementation of CRPBIS of the benefits from teachers learning how to more effectively implement CRPBIS through training and coaching (Kranski & Steed, 2022; Kulkarni et al., 2019).

However, two studies expressed concerns about a lack of comprehensiveness or consistency in CRPBIS implementation. Bottiani et al. (2018) conducted a systematic review of CRPBIS and determined that there was a lack of consistency with implementation. Gaias et al. (2019) examined the classroom management styles of middle school teachers and their use of CRPBIS and partially concurred that even though the basic elements of PBIS were being utilized, there was still a discrepancy with the consistency and comprehensiveness of implementing effective practices that were culturally responsive to the backgrounds of students of color. Both the findings of

Bottiani et al. (2018) and Gaias et al. (2019) indicated that there was a lack of consistency and or comprehensiveness with CRPBIS implementation.

*Section Summary*

The fourth main section of this literature review explored Culturally Responsive Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (CRPBIS) in the current literature. Consensus was found that CRPBIS was designed to better address and was effective for helping to reduce cultural and racial biases and disparities within PBIS as related to school discipline and behavior management (Bal, 2018; Gadd & Butler, 2019; Kulkarni et al., 2019; Nayir, 2022; Noltemeyer et al., 2018b). Specific consensus was found that the most effective methods for implementing CRPIS included facilitating more parental involvement and more culturally and racially sensitive two-way communication with families, learning about students' home cultures, and making classroom activities more inclusive to students from differing cultural and racial backgrounds (Gadd & Butler, 2019; Nayir, 2022). Specific consensus was found as well of the benefits from teachers learning how to more effectively implement CRPBIS through training and coaching of garnering more support among teachers for CRPBIS and more effectively minimizing behavioral and discipline challenges among their students (Kranski & Steed, 2022; Kulkarni et al., 2019). However, CRBIS was also noted to lack comprehensiveness and consistency with implementation (Bottiani et al., 2018; Gaias et al., 2019). The next main section Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Culturally Responsive Practices, and African American students will more specifically focus on African American

students and compare PBIS with CRBIS in its effectiveness with fostering success among this student population as more related to the focus of the proposed study.

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Culturally Responsive Practices, and African American Students**

As previously established, PBIS was found to generally lack comprehensiveness and consistency with its implementation that may impact its effectiveness for fostering the success of all students (Bastable et al., 2021; Bastable et al., 2020; Floress et al., 2022; Freeman et al., 2019; Gagnon et al., 2018; Gagnon et al., 2020; Goodman-Scott et al., 2021; Kelly et al., 2022; Klingbeil et al., 2019; Kittelman et al. 2020; Nese et al., 2019; Nese et al., 2021; Noltemeyer et al., 2018a; OHandley et al., 2022; Scaletta & Tejero Hughes, 2021; Steed et al., 2022). As also previously established, CRBIS was designed to better address this lack of comprehensiveness and consistency within PBIS by focusing on reducing cultural and racial biases and disparities as related to school discipline and behavior management, and when comprehensively and consistently implemented, was effective for achieving this purpose (Bal, 2018; Gadd & Butler, 2019; Kulkarni et al., 2019; Nayir, 2022; Noltemeyer et al., 2018b). Further support was found specific to African American students that PBIS alone without culturally responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline (Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Buckley, 2019; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021).

**Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports in Ohio**

In 2018, Ohio enacted the Supporting Alternatives for Fair Education (SAFE) Act, House Bill 318, as one of the strongest state laws in the country addressing multi-tiered behavioral supports in the interest of reducing disciplinary referrals (Ohio Department of Education, 2020). However, despite PBIS implementation, African American male students in the Columbus, Ohio school district continued to experience a disproportionate risk of behavioral referrals (Office of Civil Rights, 2018). A specific focus on PBIS in Ohio as also related to African American students in the existing literature further revealed that while PBIS may help to reduce racial disparities in school discipline with high fidelity, there was a need for more PBIS training and more culturally responsive practices to specifically help foster African American student success (Franchino, 2020; Jabar, 2018; Noltemeyer et al., 2019).

*PBIS in Ohio and African American Students*

Although quite limited in the existing literature, a few studies were found that specifically focused on PBIS or African American students in the state of Ohio. Franchino (2020) researched implementation of PBIS in Ohio and determined that the use of PBIS was strongly encouraged and there was a need for Ohio districts to offer PBIS training. These findings indicated that there was a need for more PBIS training in Ohio and further implied that PBIS implementation may not be required in all school districts. However, more research is needed to contribute to the existing literature specific to Ohio to better understand the extent to which PBIS is actually being implemented and its effectiveness in fostering better student outcomes. Noltemeyer et al. (2019) examined

whether there were differences in discipline and academic outcomes based on Tier 1

PBIS implementation fidelity level in Ohio schools when accounting for key covariates

and found that schools with higher implementation fidelity had a significantly lower

number of out-of-school suspensions per 100 students than schools with lower

implementation fidelity when accounting for racial demographic covariates. The findings

of Noltemeyer et al. (2019) indicated that higher implementation fidelity of PBIS in Ohio

schools at Tier 1 reduced racial disparities in school discipline specific to out-of-school

suspensions. Yet, these findings do not support the broader previous consensus in the

literature pertaining to African American students that PBIS alone without culturally

responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline

(Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Buckley, 2019; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al.,

2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Santiago-

Rosario et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021). Therefore, more research is needed to support or

refute these findings of Noltemeyer et al. (2019), particularly as they may pertain directly

to African American students and in the state of Ohio.

Two studies were found in the literature specific to African American students in

Ohio. Jabar (2018) researched culturally responsive best practices in Ohio and

determined that there was a need for such approaches to better foster student success

among African American students. These findings indicated that there was a need for

more culturally responsive practices to facilitate student success among African

American students in Ohio and further imply that more research is needed in this area as

well to better understand what culturally responsive practices, if any, may already be

implemented in Ohio and how effective they may be. Rudd (2014) analyzed data from

the Ohio Children's Defense Fund and determined that the level of disparity between out-

of-school suspension rates for African American and White students in Ohio's largest

urban school districts ranged from a factor of 1.9 to a factor of 13.3, and overall, the

disparity factor was 4.0, somewhat higher than the national average, meaning that the

average African American student enrolled in these districts was four times more likely

to be suspended than the average White student. The findings of Rudd (2014), although

prior to PBIS implementation in Ohio (Ohio Department of Education, 2020), established

the racial disparities in school discipline among African American students specific to

out-of-school suspensions in Ohio have existed for close to a decade, and add support to

the broader previous consensus that out-of-school suspension was the most prevalent

disciplinary action of racial disparities in school discipline among African American

students (Fadus et al., 2021; Girvan et al., 2021; Gregory et al., 2018). However, the

findings of Rudd (2014) are not current and limited to only one study, further implying

the need for further research to better understand racial disparities in school discipline

among African American students in Ohio and as specific to out-of-school suspensions.

*Section Summary*

The fifth main section of this literature review explored any existing literature on

the implementation of PBIS and culturally responsive practices within the state of Ohio

to address racial disparities in school discipline among African American students as

most specific to the proposed study. Limited consensus was found that while PBIS may

help to reduce racial disparities in school discipline with high fidelity in Ohio, African

American male students in the Ohio school district continued to experience a disproportionate risk of behavioral referrals, and there was generally a need for more PBIS training and more culturally responsive practices to specifically help foster African American student success within this state (Franchino, 2020; Jabar, 2018; Office of Civil Rights, 2018; Noltemeyer et al., 2019). Implications were discussed of the need further research in multiple areas though to better understand PBIS implementation in Ohio and its effectiveness, the implementation of culturally responsive practices in Ohio and its effectiveness, and how these efforts may or may not be effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline, particularly regarding out-of-school suspensions, and specifically among African American and African American male students. The last section of this literature review will conclude with a summary of the major relevant findings in the literature review and how gaps were established based on the existing literature that the proposed study will help to address.

This literature review had revealed of the first major theme of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports that PBIS was an effective strategy for managing student behavior and supporting student success (Ennis et al., 2018; Gage et al., 2020a; Gage et al., 2020b; Goodman-Scott et al., 2018; Loman et al., 2018; Pas et al., 2019; Sprauge et al., 2020). However, concerns were also expressed in the current literature regarding a lack of comprehensiveness and consistency with PBIS implementation that may negatively impact its effectiveness (Bastable et al., 2021; Bastable et al., 2020; Floress et al., 2022; Freeman et al., 2019; Gagnon et al., 2018; Gagnon et al., 2020; Goodman-Scott et al., 2021; Klingbeil et al., 2019; Kittelman et al. 2020; Nese et al., 2019; Nese et al.,

2021; Noltemeyer et al., 2018a; OHandley et al., 2022; Scaletta & Tejero Hughes, 2021).

A focus on the effectiveness of PBIS in elementary schools revealed further support that

PBIS was effective for managing student behavior and supporting student success (Fefer

et al., 2020; Marklez et al., 2022; McNiff et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2020), although a

lack of comprehensiveness or consistency with implementation regarding coaching

practices and a lack of staff support was noted (Kelly et al., 2022; Steed et al., 2022).

      The literature review further revealed of the second major theme of Culturally

Responsive Behavior Interventions and Supports that CRPBIS was effective for helping

to reduce cultural and racial biases and disparities within PBIS as related to school

discipline and behavior management (Bal, 2018; Gadd & Butler, 2019; Kulkarni et al.,

2019; Nayir, 2022; Noltemeyer et al., 2018b). The most effective methods for

implementing CRPIS were recognized as facilitating more parental involvement and

more culturally and racially sensitive two-way communication with families, learning

about students' home cultures, and making classroom activities more inclusive to

students from differing cultural and racial backgrounds (Gadd & Butler, 2019; Nayir,

2022). Consensus was found as well of the benefits from teachers learning how to more

effectively implement CRPBIS through training and coaching of garnering more support

among teachers for CRPBIS and more effectively minimizing behavioral and discipline

challenges among their students (Kranski & Steed, 2022; Kulkarni et al., 2019).

However, CRBIS was also noted to lack comprehensiveness and consistency with

implementation (Bottiani et al., 2018; Gaias et al., 2019).

A focus on African American students of the next two major relevant themes revealed that PBIS alone without culturally responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline (Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Buckley, 2019; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021). Culturally responsive practices that were recognized in the literature for being the most successful among African American students were mentoring or coaching, counseling, parental involvement, building positive student-teacher relationships, adapting the curriculum to emphasize more culturally relevant themes, and fostering a more safe and inclusive connection with the school environment (Buckley, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Same et al., 2018), while teacher expectations for student behavior that were culturally biased and the general awareness of students that the school discipline environment was inequitable were significant factors that negatively interacted with the African American school discipline gap (Larson et al., 2019; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021). Racial disparities in school discipline were further recognized in the current literature to significantly impact African American success in school and life in negative ways and were related to cultural and racial biases (Amemiya et al., 2020; Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Fadus et al., 2021; Girvan, 2019; Girvan et al., 2021; Goins et al., 2021; Gregory et al., 2018; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Riddle & Sinclair, 2019; Sabol et al., 2022). These cultural and racial biases in school discipline were also recognized to exist from the national to the local community level (Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Girvan et al., 2021;

Goins et al., 2021; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Riddle & Sinclair,

2019).

A specific focus on the state of Ohio revealed that although PBIS may help to

reduce racial disparities in school discipline with high fidelity in Ohio, African American

male students in the Columbus school district continued to experience a disproportionate

risk of behavioral referrals, and there was generally a need for more PBIS training and

more culturally responsive practices to specifically help foster African American student

success within this state (Franchino, 2020; Jabar, 2018; Office of Civil Rights, 2018;

Noltemeyer et al., 2019). Although there is much discussion in the literature regarding

PBIS and CRPBIS, and much discussion in the literature regarding racial disparities in

school discipline among African American students, very little is still known about how

these racial disparities specifically impact African American male students in elementary

schools. Little research is also dedicated to better understanding PBIS, CRPBIS, racial

disparities in school discipline negatively impacting African American students, and at

the elementary level among African American male students in the state of Ohio. This,

then, is the gap that will be addressed in the proposed study, as reflected in the purpose

and research questions.

Skinner's operant conditioning theory was determined to be an appropriate and

useful theoretical framework for the purpose of the proposed study because the

underlying logic for designing and conducting this study is to better understand why the

implementation of PBIS did not lead to improvement in persistently high behavioral

referrals among African American male elementary students at a school district in

Columbus, Ohio. Operant conditioning is the fundamental principle of PBIS (Myers et al., 2020; Thoutenhoofd, 2019). Chapter 3 will provide details of the method for achieving the purpose and addressing the gap established in this chapter.

**Implications**

Disproportionality in behavioral consequences is a persistent and adaptive systemic crisis. Its patterns and predictors fluctuate throughout time and across geographical and historical situations. Policy reforms have resulted from concerns about disproportionality (Bale, 2018). Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) programs were created in recent years to address the widespread need for a positive environment and to create a clear and consistent response to the particular needs of students (Sugai & Simonsen, 2019). By reducing the time students miss due to disciplinary issues, Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) implementation may increase African American male students' opportunity to learn. To be effective, PBIS must involve all school community members, including the administration, teachers, other school employees, students, and families. Teachers are essential to the success of PBIS initiatives.

However, according to research, educational leaders frequently need to pay more attention to most teachers when making decisions and initiatives to encourage positive behaviors. As a result, teachers are less willing to support such initiatives, which poses a serious threat to achieving the main goals of PBIS. Consequently, this study may inspire the construction of a professional development initiative. According to Downs (2022),

Professional training on successful culturally responsive classroom management is an essential and effective technique that can assist teachers.

To ensure the fidelity and effectiveness of the program, teachers must receive ongoing professional development on how to implement PBIS effectively. After completing the professional development workshops, teachers will have a refresher on PBIS practices focusing on culturally responsive practices and be more equipped to deal with student disciplinary issues. The professional development opportunities should be offered at the district and school levels to ensure the program is implemented consistently and in a common language.

This study's findings could also assist school leaders and school PBIS teams in comprehending teachers' worries about PBIS and in identifying areas for training and retraining to increase support for PBIS and develop the ability of teachers to apply PBIS successfully. According to Corbin et al. (2022), PBIS implementation with fidelity improves social competence, increases positive interactions between students and teachers while decreasing negative interactions improves academic outcomes, lowers the number of disciplinary cases, and creates an environment conducive to implementing effective practices.

**Summary**

This literature review revealed of the first major theme of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports that PBIS was an effective strategy for managing student behavior and supporting student success (Ennis et al., 2018; Gage et al., 2020a; Gage et al., 2020b; Goodman-Scott et al., 2018; Loman et al., 2018; Pas et al., 2019; Sprauge et

al., 2020). However, concerns were also expressed in the current literature regarding a lack of comprehensiveness and consistency with PBIS implementation that may negatively impact its effectiveness (Bastable et al., 2021; Bastable et al., 2020; Floress et al., 2022; Freeman et al., 2019; Gagnon et al., 2018; Gagnon et al., 2020; Goodman-Scott et al., 2021; Klingbeil et al., 2019; Kittelman et al. 2020; Nese et al., 2019; Nese et al., 2021; Noltemeyer et al., 2018a; OHandley et al., 2022; Scaletta & Tejero Hughes, 2021). A focus on the effectiveness of PBIS in elementary schools revealed further support that PBIS was effective for managing student behavior and supporting student success (Fefer et al., 2020; Marklez et al., 2022; McNiff et al., 2019; Sutherland et al., 2020), although a lack of comprehensiveness or consistency with implementation regarding coaching practices and a lack of staff support was noted (Kelly et al., 2022; Steed et al., 2022).

The literature review further revealed of the second major theme of Culturally Responsive Behavior Interventions and Supports that CRPBIS was effective for helping to reduce cultural and racial biases and disparities within PBIS as related to school discipline and behavior management (Bal, 2018; Gadd & Butler, 2019; Kulkarni et al., 2019; Nayir, 2022; Noltemeyer et al., 2018b).

The most effective methods for implementing CRPIS were recognized as facilitating more parental involvement and more culturally and racially sensitive two-way communication with families, learning about students' home cultures, and making classroom activities more inclusive to students from differing cultural and racial backgrounds (Gadd & Butler, 2019; Nayir, 2022). Consensus was found as well of the benefits from teachers learning how to more effectively implement CRPBIS through

training and coaching of garnering more support among teachers for CRPBIS and more effectively minimizing behavioral and discipline challenges among their students (Kranski & Steed, 2022; Kulkarni et al., 2019). However, CRBIS was also noted to lack comprehensiveness and consistency with implementation (Bottiani et al., 2018; Gaias et al., 2019).

A focus on African American students of the next two major relevant themes revealed that PBIS alone without culturally responsive practices was not effective in reducing racial disparities in school discipline (Barclay et al., 2021; Baule, 2020; Buckley, 2019; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Heidelberg et al., 2022b; Johnson et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2021; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021; Ya-yu et al., 2021). Culturally responsive practices that were recognized in the literature for being the most successful among African American students were mentoring or coaching, counseling, parental involvement, building positive student-teacher relationships, adapting the curriculum to emphasize more culturally relevant themes, and fostering a more safe and inclusive connection with the school environment (Buckley, 2019; Cook et al., 2018; Graves et al., 2017; Heidelberg et al., 2022a; Same et al., 2018), while teacher expectations for student behavior that were culturally biased and the general awareness of students that the school discipline environment was inequitable were significant factors that negatively interacted with the African American school discipline gap (Larson et al., 2019; Santiago-Rosario et al., 2021).

Racial disparities in school discipline were further recognized in the current literature to significantly impact African American success in school and life in negative

ways and were related to cultural and racial biases (Amemiya et al., 2020; Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Fadus et al., 2021; Girvan, 2019; Girvan et al., 2021; Goins et al., 2021; Gregory et al., 2018; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Riddle & Sinclair, 2019; Sabol et al., 2022). These cultural and racial biases in school discipline were also recognized to exist from the national to the local community level (Bottiani et al., 2017; Davison et al., 2022; Girvan et al., 2021; Goins et al., 2021; Ksinan et al., 2019; Owens & McLanahan, 2020; Riddle & Sinclair, 2019).

A specific focus on the state of Ohio revealed that although PBIS may help to reduce racial disparities in school discipline with high fidelity in Ohio, African American male students in the Columbus school district continued to experience a disproportionate risk of behavioral referrals, and there was generally a need for more PBIS training and more culturally responsive practices to specifically help foster African American student success within this state (Franchino, 2020; Jabar, 2018; Office of Civil Rights, 2018; Noltemeyer et al., 2019). Although there is much discussion in the literature regarding PBIS and CRPBIS, and much discussion in the literature regarding racial disparities in school discipline among African American students, very little is still known about how these racial disparities specifically impact African American male students in elementary schools. Little research is also dedicated to better understanding PBIS, CRPBIS, racial disparities in school discipline negatively impacting African American students, and at the elementary level among African American male students in the state of Ohio. This, then, is the gap that will be addressed in the proposed study, as reflected in the purpose and research questions.

Skinner's operant conditioning theory was determined to be an appropriate and useful theoretical framework for the purpose of the proposed study because the underlying logic for designing and conducting this study is to better understand why the implementation of PBIS did not lead to improvement in persistently high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students at a school district in Columbus, Ohio. Operant conditioning is the fundamental principle of PBIS (Myers et al., 2020; Thoutenhoofd, 2019). Section 2 will provide details of the method for achieving the purpose and addressing the gap established in this chapter.

Section 2: The Methodology

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore teacher perceptions of the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students, and teachers' recommendations about professional development training, resources, and supports they need to address the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system in a midwestern state in the U.S. This chapter includes discussions about the research design and rationale, role of the researcher, and methodology, including participant selection; instrumentation; procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection; and data analysis. Additionally, this chapter includes discussions of trustworthiness and ethical procedures. The chapter concludes with a summary.

**Research Design and Approach**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore teacher perceptions of the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students and teachers' recommendations about training, resources, and supports they need to address the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S.

This study used a qualitative research design, which provided an opportunity to explore teachers' perceptions regarding why the PBIS implementation did not effectively address the persistently high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students in a regional school system in Ohio. A qualitative approach was

chosen for this study instead of a quantitative approach because qualitative methods are suited for problems that need to be explored or better understood (Apuke, 2017). Qualitative research will allow for a more in-depth understanding of individuals' perceptions of, experiences with, or attitudes about a phenomenon of interest (Apuke, 2017). Furthermore, multiple frameworks, methods, and considerations are involved in shaping valuable qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Other qualitative research designs were not appropriate, given the purpose of the study. For instance, grounded theory was not appropriate because my research objective is not to develop a new theory through constant comparative analysis, which is a central characteristic of grounded theory research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A narrative design also did not align with the purpose of this study because the narrative approach involves collecting data through unstructured storytelling, which would not provide an in-depth understanding of participants' perceptions regarding why the PBIS implementation did not effectively address the persistently high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). An ethnographic design was not selected because ethnography is used to explore phenomena through a cultural lens (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Finally, a phenomenological study would not have aligned with the research purpose because phenomenology focuses on uncovering the essence of lived experiences from participants' pre-reflective perceptions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The following research questions will guide this study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are teacher perceptions of the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S.?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of training, resources, and supports they need to address the of the disproportionate of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students?

This qualitative study follows the interpretivist research tradition. The interpretivism paradigm was selected as the foundation of this research because of its potential to uncover socially constructed realities through individuals' perceptions, experiences, and viewpoints (Myers, 2019). By eliciting teacher opinions of excessive discipline difficulties, this is directly in line with RQ1. Through an interpretivist methodology and interviews with teachers, I can obtain firsthand experiences from them regarding the perceived causes of racial disciplinary differences.

Furthermore, interpretivism strongly emphasizes context and social constructions (Myers, 2019). Based on their contextual experiences in schools, RQ2 delves into another socially constructed domain: the kinds of training, materials, and supports educators feel will help resolve uneven discipline patterns. I can make sense of instructors' realities about effective remedies for this intricate societal issue by embracing an interpretivism worldview. Rather than adopting an objectivist perspective, I can produce a subjective understanding based on the specific sociocultural circumstances of teachers.

In summary, instead of testing predetermined hypothesis testing, the interpretivist framework enables me to extract data and conclusions from teacher narratives. With this flexible method, teachers can interpret their insider viewpoints into customized professional development recommendations and make sense of the different social constructs they have about racial discipline inequities. The following subsections provide further information about the study's participant selection; instrumentation; procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection; and data analysis.

**Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

The first step in the data collection process was obtaining permission to access participants from the administrators located in a regional school system in a midwestern state in the U.S. After permission was granted, I obtained approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct this study. After approval was gained, I completed the IRB process through the school district of the participants. After I gained approval, I began the recruitment process. I emailed teachers using email addresses supplied by the school district. The solicitation email included information about the study, informed consent process, and inclusion criteria. My contact information was included in the email. Recruitment continued until data saturation was reached.

For my planned research design, I recruited 10 teachers from elementary schools in one region of a midwestern state that has a total of 250 elementary teachers. The included teachers were all certified to teach in the state of Ohio. They all had some PBIS training, experience implementing PBIS, and were working in the school district while the PBIS intervention was implemented. I selected these criteria because I believed

elementary teachers who met these criteria would be able to answer the study's research question.

A purposeful sampling technique was used to obtain my sample of teachers from a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S. Purposeful sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that is used by researchers when they need participants who have the knowledge and experience required to speak about the phenomenon of interest (Williams & Vogt, 2011). While the estimated sample size was 10-12 individuals, the final sample size was 10 by the point of saturation, which occurred when information from the interviews became repetitive (Williams & Vogt, 2011).

Teachers interested to participate in the study contacted me directly through email. During the initial correspondence, I asked a few questions to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria, I went over the informed consent process and sent a copy of the informed consent form for them to sign, scan and return back to me. Once that process was complete, we scheduled a date and time for the interview. No interview was conducted without a signed copy of the informed consent form (see Appendix A). Each individual interview was conducted on Zoom and lasted approximately 30-45 minutes. After the interviews, I transcribed responses and sent a copy of the transcripts to participants for member checking.

**Table 1**

*Research Participants*

| Participant | Years of Experience | Grade Taught | Race | Gender |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | 15-20 | Primary | Black | Female |
| P2 | 0-5 | Primary | White | Female |
| P3 | 20-25 | Intermediate | Black | Female |
| P4 | 20-25 | Intermediate | Black | Male |
| P5 | 0-5 | Special Ed | White | Male |
| P6 | 10-15 | Primary | Black | Female |
| P7 | 5-10 | Special Ed | White | Female |
| P8 | 20-25 | Intermediate | Black | Male |
| P9 | 15-20 | Intermediate | White | Female |
| P10 | 15-20 | Intermediate | White | Male |

**Data Instrumentation**

I collected the data using semi structured interviews. I developed an interview protocol from the purpose, problem, research question, and the conceptual framework. This design is appropriate because I only collected data from one source. The semi structured interviews allowed participants to share their knowledge and perceptions about implementing PBIS with African American male students at the elementary level. The interviews lasted approximately 30-45 minutes and were audio recorded to aid the transcription process. I conducted the interviews using the online video-conferencing platform, Zoom.

The content validity of the interview protocol was tested via an expert panel review, which consists of three experts in the field who review the interview protocol and provide feedback (Rosenthal, 2016). Additionally, the expert panel review served to evaluate whether the interview questions were free from bias and worded in a way that is clear and concise (Rosenthal, 2016). The objective of the expert panel review was to

make changes to the interview questions based on the feedback before conducting the interviews.

Based on the research topic and conceptual framework, I created the interview questions for my study. I identified the purpose of the instrument and the study to be examined with the aid of the research question and conceptual framework. I used a combination of open coding, axial coding for placing data in categories, and thematic analysis to identify, interpret and analyze patterns for the data analysis, which provided a thorough and unbiased report of data.

## Role of the Researcher

My role in this study was observer-participant. Specifically, during the semi structured interviews, I took the role as participant as I interacted and engage with the teachers participating in the interviews (Roulston & Choi, 2018). This role of the researcher reflects the idea that qualitative researchers are an integral part of the research process, with the interview functioning as a natural social environment where the researcher can interact and collect information from a willing participant (Roulston & Choi, 2018). However, the social nature of the interview process and researcher's role as a participant can create opportunity for bias to be introduced into the research process by either the researcher or participant (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

There are also risks related to researchers' social competencies and whether they have the necessary social knowledge to construct a natural environment in which the interviews can be conducted (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). My experiences as a district PBIS coordinator, elementary teacher, counselor, and mother of African

American males have contributed to my interest in studying teachers' perspectives of PBIS. To minimize the potential for bias, I engaged in researcher reflexivity, which is characterized by me recognizing and recording personal biases before, during, and after the study is conducted (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000).

## Data Analysis Plan

I used the data I collected from the interviews to answer the research questions for this study. The audio recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by Microsoft Word transcription. When the transcripts were completed, I reviewed the transcripts to ensure they were accurate. I read each interview transcription while listening to the audio recordings of each interview. Each transcription included a word-for-word written record of all the research questions and answers from each interviewee. After the accuracy of transcripts were complete, I analyzed the data using six-step thematic analysis proposed by Braun et al. (2014).

This type of qualitative analysis requires the researcher to 1) become familiar with the data, 2) develop codes for the data, 3) create themes with pattern codes, 4) evaluate themes, 5) label themes, and 6) report the final themes (Braun et al., 2014). I used NVivo software to help organize data during the coding and theming process. However, before beginning the analysis, I transcribed the interviews and sent the transcripts to the participants for member checking. Participants were asked to review transcriptions to check for any inaccuracies and other discrepancies. The participants found no discrepancies that needed to be addressed; all the information on the transcriptions were accurate.

For the first step of the analysis, I became familiar with the data by reading the interview transcripts and PBIS implementation documents multiple times (Braun et al., 2014). For the second step of the analysis, I used a first-cycle coding strategy called initial coding by developing codes and attaching them to sections of text that are relevant to the research questions (Saldaña, 2016). In the third step, I used a second-cycle coding technique called pattern coding to group together related initial codes and develop themes (Saldaña, 2016). In the fourth step, I evaluated the themes that emerged in the second step to ensure that they are relevant (Braun et al., 2014). This led to the removal of themes that were irrelevant or the merging of smaller similar themes. In the fifth step, I defined and labeled the themes according to their context or content (Braun et al., 2014). In the sixth and final step, I developed a narrative of the themes that included supporting quotes from the interview transcripts, which will be included in Chapter 4 (Braun et al., 2014).

**Table 2**

*Training and Support Needs Codes*

| Codes | Description | Participant | Excerpt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Training Needs | Desire for more formal PBIS and cultural awareness training | Speaker 2 | "I have done a lot of independent learning but I wish I had more of an opportunity to have more formal education." |
| | | Speaker 7 | "I feel like we didn't get a very good initial training on what it was and how to do it." |
| | | Speaker 6 | "I know I need more training myself on PBIS practices." |
| Preparedness | Feeling underprepared to implement PBIS effectively | Speaker 7 | "I feel like we didn't get a very good initial training on what it was and how to do it." |
| | | Speaker 3 | "More modeling for teachers is probably needed for preparing staff." |
| Cultural Awareness | Understanding how culture impacts behaviors and relationships | Speaker 5 | "There are inherent differences in the way that I process, the way I communicate versus my students." |
| | | Speaker 10 | "I want us to build more cultural awareness as a staff." |
| Implicit Biases | Addressing educator implicit biases that influence discipline | Speaker 10 | "Our implicit biases definitely contribute to how we perceive behaviors." |
| | | Speaker 2 | "We have to confront our own biases." |
| Tiered Supports | PBIS multi-tiered system of behavioral supports | Speaker 10 | "The framework lays out three tiers of support for students." |
| | | Speaker 3 | "I try to provide supports based on where kids are at." |
| Individualization | Tailoring supports to individual student needs | Speaker 8 | "You gotta be able to reach every student differently." |
| | | Speaker 6 | "The framework needs to address differences better." |
| Data-Driven Decisions | Using behavior data to inform PBIS implementation | Speaker 10 | "Now we regularly review discipline data as a staff." |
| | | Speaker 1 | "I think the data shows there is still disproportionality present." |

**Table 3**

*Relationship Building Codes*

| Codes | Description | Participant | Excerpt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Relationships | Building connections between teachers and students | Speaker 3 | "Building relationships with my students is key." |
| | | Speaker 8 | "Connecting with students is so important." |
| Motivations | Understanding what motivates student behaviors | Speaker 10 | "I want to better understand what motivates each student." |
| | | Speaker 2 | "We have to better understand what motivates these kids." |
| Perspectives | Learning student perspectives on behaviors and discipline | Speaker 9 | "Let the students have a voice in explaining behaviors." |
| | | Speaker 4 | "Getting student input could really help us." |
| Growth Mindset | Reinforcing student improvements and positive changes | Speaker 8 | "We celebrate the positive changes and growth students make." |
| | | Speaker 2 | "I try to focus on incremental growth with my students." |
| Identity Differences | Cultural identity differences impacting interactions | Speaker 4 | "Students relate way better to teachers that share their identity." |
| | | Speaker 5 | "My identity is central to how I approach behavior." |
| Cultural Differences | Broad cultural differences influencing behaviors and relationships | Speaker 2 | "There are inherent differences in values." |
| | | Speaker 6 | "What behaviors we perceive as negative or concerning varies by culture." |

**Table 4**

*Consistency and Structure Codes*

| Codes | Description | Participant | Excerpt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Positives Focus | Emphasize reinforcing positive behaviors, not just punishing negatives | Speaker 9 | "The focus shifts more to catching kids doing things right." |
| | | Speaker 1 | "I try to actively praise positive learner behaviors." |
| Reinforcing Good Behaviors | Using incentives, praise to encourage desired student behaviors | Speaker 3 | "I'm constantly giving out stickers for good behavior." |
| | | Speaker 8 | "I reward students when I observe them going above and beyond." |
| Consistency | Having consistent expectations, rules across classrooms | Speaker 2 | "We need consistency in our systems and language." |
| | | Speaker 4 | "PBIS helps align expectations across classrooms." |
| Shared Expectations | Common behavior expectations for students across teachers | Speaker 6 | "PBIS establishes baseline expectations that all teachers reference." |
| | | Speaker 5 | "I appreciate having a standard set of expectations." |
| Accountability | Systems to hold students accountable to meeting expectations | Speaker 3 | "We use daily reminder songs to hold kids accountable." |
| | | Speaker 10 | "Part of PBIS is accounting for behaviors." |
| Rules and Procedures | Defined policies, rules, and procedures for student behaviors | Speaker 1 | "PBIS encourages explicit rules and procedures for desired conduct." |
| | | Speaker 7 | "We teach students rules about appropriate life behaviors." |

| Codes | Description | Participant | Excerpt |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rewards | Use of rewards to motivate behavior | Speaker 7 | "We have Bee Bucks that students can use at our rewards store." |
| Incentives | Use of incentives to reinforce behaviors | Speaker 5 | "PBIS mainly seems to rely on incentives." |
| Praise | Verbally praising positive behaviors | Speaker 1 | "I always praise students making good choices." |
| Staff Buy-In | Teacher support/use of PBIS | Speaker 10 | "Buy-in among staff is inconsistent which is frustrating." |
| Fidelity | Following PBIS components fully | Speaker 9 | "Fidelity in implementation is critical for PBIS success." |
| Implementation Inconsistency | Uneven PBIS adoption | Speaker 8 | "Some teachers use PBIS really well but others don't put effort in." |
| Reducing Suspensions | Decreases in suspensions | Speaker 4 | "I think PBIS helped reduce suspensions upstairs." |
| Discipline Referrals | Tracking student behavior referrals | Speaker 7 | "Our referrals have gone down schoolwide since PBIS." |
| Disproportionality | Unequal discipline by race | Speaker 1 | "Disproportionate discipline is still happening unfortunately." |
| Areas for Improvement | Aspects of PBIS needing work | Speaker 2 | "There's still room for us to improve on this framework." |
| Ongoing Growth Needed | Need for continued PBIS focus | Speaker 6 | "We have more work to do in implementing PBIS effectively." |

The result of this basic qualitative study was limited to elementary school teachers. Another limitation is the small sample size for the research and the transferability to apply to similar settings. The sample size for this study was 10 elementary teachers from multiple school sites. This small sample will limit the number of perspectives that will be obtained. Findings will not be generalizable to other settings. In addition, the study's findings will not represent the perspectives of all teachers in the midwestern state in the U.S.

Finally, this study contained a limitation inherent in qualitative research: researcher bias. As the instrument for data collection, I served as a filter and interpreter of data, and so my own perspectives may affect how I conducted the interviews, what material I chose to include in the data analysis, and the conclusions I drew from this analysis. To reduce the effect of the researcher's bias, Davis (2020) recommended the implementation of the reflexivity strategy. Reflexivity is a practice by which the researcher examines biases and critically self-evaluates personality that might influence the research process and outcome. By keeping field notes and a reflective notebook to record my thoughts, feelings, and decisions throughout the data-collecting and analysis process, I aimed to discover and examine my positionality and biases. These factors may limit the transferability of the study, but the issues raised here may be informative for teachers and schools challenged by the behavior problems of elementary students.

## Data Analysis Results

This study aimed to understand better teacher perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary

students located in a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S. The following research questions that guided this study are as follows:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are teacher perceptions of the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S.?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of training, resources, and supports they need to address the disproportionate of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students?

For this basic qualitative study, I interviewed ten teachers from six elementary schools located in a regional school system in a midwestern state in the U.S. Three primary themes emerged from the one-on-one conversations after the coding process: training, preparation, and support needs expressed for effectively implementing PBIS and culturally responsive practices, relationship building, and consistency and structure in expectations and consequences.

## Theme 1: Training and Support Needs

The first theme covers training, preparation, and support needed for effectively implementing PBIS, a common theme throughout the data analysis. When asked the research questions, "Describe the type of training you received on PBIS?" "Explain how the training you received has helped you implement PBIS in your classroom?" All had minimal or inconsistent training. Many Participants felt they and their schools needed more formal, in-depth training on implementing PBIS with fidelity to help them utilize the entire PBIS framework. Many of the participants lacked knowledge of what PBIS is

and the components that make up the framework, as well as very little training on culturally responsive practices. Participants reported receiving some training, some of which included information on PBIS and behaviors and possible strategies for teaching students with challenging behaviors.

Nevertheless, the training was minimal and gave little attention to teaching strategies for what the PBIS framework is, how to utilize the framework schoolwide and inside the classrooms to build classrooms where everyone's culture is accepted, and needs are being met from the teacher to the students, especially with dealing with problematic behaviors. Participant 1 acknowledges receiving some PBIS and cultural responsiveness training but feels she needs more in-depth training to truly understand and implement the practices well. She expresses wanting to learn more. Participant 2 indicates needing more training and modeling herself on PBIS practices. She has done independent learning but wants more formal development to utilize it in her classroom successfully. Participant 2 also advocates for training in alignment between PBIS, trauma-informed teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy, and social-emotional learning. She sees them as interconnected and believes it will help decrease the number of disciplinary infractions among the African American Male population.

Participant 3 indicates that schoolwide PBIS implementation in her building needs more work, especially in the intermediate grades in her building. She believes more training could help with the PBIS implementation. She stated, "My training was a few years ago, before COVID, and I believe we went and had a workshop or whatever; I have not had it. I haven't had a formal one. I guess I could say, you know, at our school, we've

done the training or whatever with the teachers. But mine, like I said, was some years ago at another location." Participant 7 stated, "The type of training I received I remember my first day as a teacher, and we were told at our first meeting in August that we do PBIS. This is PBIS, and this is what we do. So, I don't really think I got a real training, but we were just told, like we're doing this in our building to decrease the behaviors." Participant 9 stated, "I honestly don't remember too much training. I probably had it when I first came to Ohio because I taught in Las Vegas for 14 years before I came here. But what I have found is I just naturally have done PBIS. I just didn't know it was called that because I was a firm believer in giving students a voice in their learning and their behaviors, and I always give them a chance. I don't know if defending them is the right word; I guess defend themselves and have a voice about why we do this. So, I don't remember too much training, but I naturally did it if that makes sense. I had pretty much zero training in culturally responsive practices."

When asked, "Describe the type of training you received on culture-responsive practices?" "Participants 1, 2, 5, and 10 were the only participants who stated they had Culturally responsive practices training. Participant 1 stated, "I've been in a couple of PDs where they've kind of talked about it, and that's where I received a book. I've not had the opportunity to read the book or dive into it as much as I would like. I can remember just thinking this is something that I am interested in, particularly because it is what it says in the beginning of the title, "culturally responsive," so it goes back to what I was saying about us learning about our students pretty much and knowing how are different ways to respond to them that will be more effective." Participant 2 stated, "We

did a lot of reading in college about culturally responsive teaching and pedagogies. As an educator, I have had some training in professional development. I would say a lot of my professional development is self-guided. I do a lot of independent reading and podcasting in my free time to gain knowledge. I do think that there are opportunities within the district, but sometimes, I do feel like district opportunities are not always deep enough for me. I feel like sometimes I'll do a district PD, and it's something that I've already read on my own. And so, I feel like I'm not always being professionally developed." Participant 5 stated, "Culturally responsive practices was kind of a big push towards the end of my undergraduate career. They were making sure we're culturally responsive and culturally aware of whom you're teaching and the differences of whom you're coming from but I have had minimal training during staff meetings on culturally responsive practices."

Participant 10 stated, "I have received some training. But I would like to receive more training." All participants expressed they would love training in culturally responsive practices training. They would love the trainings to include social-emotional development, trauma-informed care, and restorative justice and how they can be embedded into the PBIS framework to prevent challenging behaviors in the classroom.

**Theme 2: Relationship Building**

The second theme centers on relationship building elements like cultural awareness, understanding students' lives, and positive framing of students' experiences. Several participants discussed how biases impacted discipline and relationships with students of color. The importance of cultural awareness, identity, and experiences was a recurring theme for all the participants. They expressed that cultural knowledge is

important in the classroom space and seen as key to reducing disparities in discipline. Multiple participants emphasized the importance of building relationships with students as part of PBIS, getting to know them, their needs, motivations, and lives outside school. Several participants emphasized the need for more thorough and ongoing PBIS and cultural responsiveness training to deepen understanding and effective implementation.

When asked, "Could the identity differences between the teacher and the student(s) be contributing to managing behaviors in the classroom?" all participants stated that identity differences play a role in the teachers' discipline of students. Participant 2 states, "Yes. Yes, I definitely 100% think that that is oftentimes an issue in classrooms, and that's just the simplest way to put it. I mean, the way that I grew up is similar in some ways to my student's homes, and then it is wildly different in other ways. It's really, it's possible to get to know what the identities of our students are in the classroom, but I think that there will always be a little bit of separation because the way that we are is just going to always be different at home. Me as an adult, too. Some of the values that students have and values that families have, our teachers, individual values, and just things that set us off are all going to be very different. Some of those things are cultural, and it's not necessarily at the fault of anybody, but I do think that that is something that we need to address; just what are the options moving forward because we are going to have those different identities, no matter what I think."

Participant 5 states, "Oh, absolutely. I think that is a lot of it. The disproportionate amount of especially black students being referred, office referrals, and suspensions. Identity between teacher and student is a huge thing. I think coming from different

backgrounds and coming from different understandings and different spaces is huge. The way people perceive things and the way you take in things, where you treat language, the way you treat physical body space, and the way you treat other people's emotions, has a huge take on how you're going to react to behavior. How you're going to respond to a behavior, how you're going to talk about that behavior to another adult, to the students themselves. And, obviously, most importantly, how you're going to address that behavior. Because if you have a much different identity in yourself and understanding and different background experience yourself, you're going to pull far much more on your own, even unintentionally with some implicit bias or whatever it may be. Um, but you're going to pull on what you know. I think everyone reverts to what they know in moments of crisis, like that's just what we're hardwired to do. So, if you have a different identity, a different understanding of the students you're serving it is something that needs to be very thoughtful and very mindfully thought about. And I think that can definitely contribute to how behaviors are handled, how students are handled, and how outcomes eventually come of those. Whether good, bad, ugly, the suspensions, the referrals, whatever it may be."

When asked, "Do you think culturally responsive practices should be included in PBIS trainings? If so, do you think culturally responsive practices will decrease African American male students' behaviors in the classroom? "All the participants agreed that culturally responsive practices should be included within the PBIS trainings. The vast majority of participants felt identity differences, cultural awareness, and biases impacted student perceptions, relationships, and discipline. Building connections with students to

understand motivations and perspectives was important. Participant 1 stated, "I definitely think it would because it is just important to recognize that we are not the same, that we are all different, and how we respond to different individuals is important. We have to know that we will never know everything about our students. Our students come from all different backgrounds and cultures, but yes, particularly for our boys. We need to learn how to reach them and not make them feel the way that the world in general makes them feel, particularly as educators. They are with us the majority of the time, and I think it is key for us to learn these culturally responsive practices. And it is still a goal of mine to figure out how to learn it with fidelity."

Participant 6 states, "- I do think it should be because I think it would help some teachers understand students that are different from them and help them understand that their experience growing up living life now is not the same as these other students. They don't know what a lot of these students are going through. So, for me, if you understand where our students come from, you understand their culture, you understand our expressions, things that we do, it would help. I feel like there's sometimes a fear of black children, especially black males, that is put out there, like in media, but I feel like if they understand, there is nothing to fear. This is just how they are. This is how they are raised, and if you understand their experiences, I think you would take down the referrals, the suspensions, and some of the behaviors." Participant 6 advocates that culturally responsive practices and student experiences will decrease bias in discipline.

Participant 7 states, "I think it should be. I think culturally responsive practices are very important to our students and very important to teaching. I think it should be

included in PBIS training. I think it will decrease African American male students'

behaviors in the classroom and also in society as well." Participant 9 states, "Absolutely,

probably should because it focuses on their culture and where they come from. That plays

into who we are as people as our culture, then yes, it's very important that that is also

interweaved with PBIS because it's an easy thing to put in there."

Participant 4 states, "Well, I think it should be, and I think it can because when

you understand a culture, then it changes your view about them. So, you might not be as

quick to say go off, or you might not be as quick to want to discipline and confront this

situation. If you know a little bit about the culture and you understand why a person may

be acting this way or feeling that way or why did they respond like this in certain

situations? So yes, I believe it would help if you knew about culturally responsive

practice."

Overall, all the participants felt that identity differences impacted daily

interactions with students regarding disparities in discipline. The majority of the

participants mentioned that teachers need to have a growth mindset when it comes to

cultural differences and reinforce more positive behaviors in order to decrease discipline

infractions among African American male students.

**Theme 3: Consistency and Structure in Expectations and Consequences**

The third theme captures the desire for consistency and structure in expectations

and consequences that many participants highlighted. Numerous participants stated how

PBIS establishes clear, consistent expectations and rules for student behaviors across

classrooms and teachers. Participants felt that when classroom systems were clear, had

consistent expectations and rules aligned with the schoolwide systems for accountability, and used incentives and positive reinforcement, they saw a decrease in some of the disparities in discipline. Multiple participants felt that when the lack of staff/teacher buy-in and fidelity in utilizing PBIS was inconsistent in their buildings, it posed a challenge in implementing the PBIS framework. Another common theme under this theme was PBIS shifting more focus to reinforcing positive behaviors versus only punishing negatives. PBIS praises the desired actions teachers want to see in their classrooms. When teachers focused on the positives over the negative behaviors, were consistent in their expectations, and praised, rewarded, and acknowledged the positive behaviors, participants noticed an improvement in behaviors in their classroom.

In summary, the participants' themes emphasize that more in-depth training in PBIS, culturally responsive practices, consistency, clarity, and structure are integral to the PBIS framework in order for it to achieve behavior change and be implemented with fidelity. This level of professional development, clarity, and consistency forms the foundation of an effective PBIS program. While supporters overall, most participants indicated significant room for continued improvement in PBIS implementation and effectiveness.

<center>**Evidence of Quality**</center>

Member checks were performed to ensure the accuracy of the data. Member checking is a validity check often regarded as the gold standard in qualitative research (Motulsky, 2021). Member checking is used to "solicit feedback from one's participants or stakeholders about one's data or interpretation." (Motulsky, 2021). I used the informed

consent form to tell ten participants about the member-checking process. Before the interview began, I reminded the participants of the member-checking procedure. I informed the participants that I would email them their share of the transcription once I completed their interview transcription. I tasked participants to read their interview responses and confirm the data analysis's accuracy. All ten participants agreed that the data was correct and that there was no need to meet to debate it. Peer debriefing was another approach for gathering evidence of quality.

**Trustworthiness**

Qualitative researchers assess the validity and reliability of their research according to the trustworthiness of results. The conditions for trustworthiness include credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Credibility represents how well the study's results speak for the participants' experiences (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To enhance the credibility of this study, I used member checking, which is characterized by sending the interview transcripts to the participants and asking them to verify the accuracy of interpretations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Dependability represents how well the study's procedures are followed and documented (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To enhance the dependability of this study, I kept an audit trail of my research decisions and all the steps I took during the research process. I also documented any best practices, guidelines, and protocols I followed to conduct this research.

Transferability represents how well the study's findings can be applied to policies and practices, or other settings and contexts (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). To enhance the

transferability of this study, I provided a rich description of participants' perceptions and the context of the study (Carcary, 2009). Finally, confirmability represents how well the study's findings can be verified by other researchers (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The use of an audit train will also enhance the confirmability of this study, as the audit trail will provide enough details for other researchers to replicate the study (Carcary, 2009).

## Ethical Procedures

When conducting research that includes human subjects, researchers need to follow the ethical principles and guidelines provided in the Belmont Report, including respect for persons, beneficence, and justice (Arifin, 2018). I took several actions to ensure that these principles are considered throughout the research process. First, I obtained approval from Walden University's IRB, the school district's IRB, and Administration site permission to conduct my study before collecting any data. Additionally, I went over the informed consent process with each participant and collected signed informed consent forms before conducting interviews. The informed consent process was followed to certify that participants volunteered to participate and that they understand their rights as participants, including their right to withdraw at any time during the study without penalty (Arifin, 2018). I also avoided asking interview questions that may provoke emotional distress and stressed to participants' that their participation and answers to the interview questions will not have a negative impact on their job as a teacher (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). I kept participants' information confidential and protected their identities by using pseudonyms (i.e., P1, P2, etc.), instead of collecting personally identifiable information. All research materials and data will be

kept on a secure, password protected hard drive that is only accessible to me. All content on the hard drive will be permanently deleted after five years.

**Summary**

The purpose of this basic qualitative study is to explore teacher perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system located in Ohio. This local study site is an example of the national problem. The phenomenon of interest is high behavioral referrals among African American male elementary students. A qualitative approach was chosen for this study instead of a quantitative approach because qualitative methods are suited for problems that need to be explored or better understood (Apuke, 2017).

A project study design was selected because it is an appropriate design for researchers who seek to understand participants' perceptions about a phenomenon in its real-world context (Yin, 2016). The project design will give an example of a current issue in my profession that can help with contributing to a suggested solution. What is the unsolved issue, why should it be fixed, and how will my research help academics or practitioners in my field tackle the of overrepresentations of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students.

For my research design, I used the following data sources: Audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews with ten teachers who are teaching classes at the elementary level located in a regional school system in Ohio and are willing to participate in this study. The chosen teachers had some training and experience with implementing PBIS and is working in the school district while the PBIS framework is implemented. Data was

analyzed using six-step thematic analysis proposed by Braun et al. (2014). In Section 3: A three-day professional development project was created to acquaint educators with implementing culturally responsive teaching within the PBIS framework. Professional development training and behavior programs like PBIS should incorporate more culturally responsive management strategies to address disparity in disciplinary procedures.

This calls for the districts to develop a systematic plan to reinforce these strategies through professional development to ensure educators have the skills to successfully deal with varied cultures entering their classrooms. Specifically, it aims to equip educators with strategies to reduce their own implicit biases and create positive, culturally affirming classroom environments that can help reduce disproportionate discipline. This project will, in turn, broaden teachers' cultural awareness and enhance their critical understanding. It will encourage teachers to think critically, reflect on their awareness and learning, and work towards social and racial justice, collective understanding, equity, and a collective humanity.

Section 3: The Project

**Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to explore teacher perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. In this study, 10 elementary teachers were interviewed. I concentrated on their existing training as well as perceptions of the training and support needed to combat the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. Based on the teachers' comments during the interview process, a three-day professional development training was developed as a final deliverable for this study. The project is designed to train educators on the PBIS framework and culturally responsive practices to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. Further, the three-day professional development in-service program aims to equip educators with strategies to reduce their own implicit biases and create positive, culturally affirming classroom environments that can help reduce disproportionate discipline. They will discover how to overcome challenging behaviors, use the PBIS system and hands-on intervention strategies, and connect with peers to support children in a culturally responsive way.

**Rationale**

The three-day, in-service professional development was chosen to foster growth by building educators' knowledge and competencies so they can implement culturally responsive PBIS practices effectively to help combat the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. Ko et al. (2021)

state that culturally responsive professional learning can effectively build critical praxis, solidarity, and agency to advance educational, racial justice. It shows promise for addressing systemic inequities.

This three-day professional development will empower educators with frameworks, mindsets, and skills that allow PBIS to be implemented more equitably and successfully. It aims to enable meaningful change in practice and culture. According to the data analysis, most of the participants would like more in-depth training in PBIS, and support to teach children with undesired behaviors and learn ways to prevent the undesirable behaviors. All participants expressed that they would love training in culturally responsive practices and how they can be embedded them into the PBIS framework to reduce disproportionate discipline rates. All the participants agreed that culturally responsive practices should be included in the PBIS trainings. The majority of participants felt identity differences, cultural awareness, and biases impacted student perceptions, relationships, and discipline. They felt that building connections with students to understand motivations and perspectives was necessary to help decrease classroom behaviors.

The project addresses the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students by providing PBIS and culturally sustaining professional development in catalyzing individual and systemic change, which includes a hands-on component, storytelling, restorative circles, dialogue, and reflection activities that push past surface-level coverage of bias to engage educators in confronting systemic

racism to advance cultural consciousness and dismantle systemic inequities within schools.

Each professional development training will equip educators with the desire for deeper training on bias and systemic change, an understanding of the PBIS framework, and useful skills and strategies to implement in their classrooms to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. The training can push past surface-level coverage of bias to engage educators in confronting systemic racism to advance cultural consciousness and dismantle systemic inequities within schools. Each professional development training will equip educators with the desire for deeper training on bias and systemic change, an understanding of the PBIS framework, and useful skills and strategies to implement in their classrooms to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students.

## Review of the Literature

The data analysis for this project study indicated a need to create three-day culturally responsive PBIS professional development training for educators. Participants expressed needing more in-depth training on PBIS and culturally responsive practices to reduce disproportionate discipline rates. Thus, a three-day professional development was created to equip educators with the desire for deeper training on bias and systemic change, an understanding of the PBIS framework, and valuable skills and strategies to implement in their classrooms to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students.

The literature review focuses on the three primary themes that emerged from the one-on-one conversations after the coding process: training, preparation, and support needs expressed for effectively implementing PBIS and culturally responsive practices, relationship building, and consistency and structure in expectations and consequences. Professional development is the most appropriate genre to address the problem because it provides educators with training designed to move beyond surface-level representation to operationalizing cultural knowledge into PBIS policy and practice (Lo et al., 2022).

These three-day professional developments emerged from what participants expressed as their needs during the interview process. The focus of the three-day training centered on racial and cultural identities in PBIS by involving stakeholders in design, recognizing cultural assets, and changing exclusionary systems. This project study aligns with the conceptual framework of Ladson-Billings' culturally relevant pedagogy and Skinner's operant conditioning. These two concepts support the implementation of PBIS.

This literature review includes search phrases that lead to peer-reviewed publications and computerized search engines. The choice of the project was justified by relevant literature. This section will include information regarding the significance and applicability of professional development training and content needs, which include PBIS and culturally responsive practices as they pertain to decreasing the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African African-American males at the elementary level. Additionally, through relevant literature, I address how the lack of staff/teacher buy-in and fidelity in utilizing PBIS is inconsistent; thus, it can pose a challenge in implementing the PBIS framework.

The databases used to conduct these searches included ResearchGate, ERIC, Sage Pub, and PubMed. Google and Google Scholar were the search engines used in this study. The search terms included in this study were *racial disparities in school discipline, positive behavior interventions and supports, culturally responsive positive behavior interventions and supports, school discipline, and African American students, African American male students*, and *elementary school students, professional development, and Ohio*. Relevant studies were generated from database searches using these keywords, both individually and in combination. Those deemed relevant to the study were included in the literature review, with 92% of sources having been published within the last five years from 2019-2023.

**Training and Support Needs**

High-quality professional development is considered essential for educators to continuously build their knowledge, refine their practices, and provide optimal instruction to advance student outcomes (Garet et al., 2020; Macias, 2020). The dynamic nature of the teaching profession necessitates ongoing growth, particularly as new understandings around cultural competence, disciplinary equity, and other timely issues continue to evolve. Classroom contexts today require more multicultural consciousness and anti-bias skill sets than ever before.

When structured intentionally around authentic teacher input and embedded within collaborative systems, professional learning activities can increase content mastery, pedagogical skill, and instructional effectiveness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Garet et al., 2020). Myriad studies underscore that one-time workshops often fail to

translate insights into practice or impact outcomes. Instead, active learning opportunities sustained over time where teachers can apply information and receive expert feedback are associated with knowledge transfer and gains in student performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Specifically, researchers emphasize effective professional development centers sustained engagement with practical curriculum connections, embedded communities to support implementation, peer collaboration, and applied practice with reflection (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Garet et al., 2020; Macias, 2020). Ongoing activities tailored to local contexts also empower educators to adapt materials and strategies toward maximum learning in their unique environments (Parsons et al., 2022). Embedding training within teachers' everyday contexts facilitates integration (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

In summary, a broad scholarly consensus advocates formalized professional development that provides collaborative, content-rich activities via sustained durations with expert guidance and embedded feedback. These reflective communities and hands-on experiences increase teachers' self-efficacy, instructional capacities, cultural consciousness, and ethical orientation - ultimately benefiting diverse student bodies through an equity lens (Garet et al., 2020; Ladson-Billings, 2021). Teacher development should consciously strengthen multicultural perspectives and challenge assumptions.

The study's participants expressed a need to understand how to apply PBIS in the classroom to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African-American males. Success in addressing undesired behaviors in the classroom requires

faithful implementation of PBIS. PBIS provides proactive, preventative, and educative approaches grounded in behavior analysis principles, which are key details of PBIS implementation features and include defined outcomes, research-based practices, data collection, and systems coaching that resulted in positive outcomes of PBIS related to reductions in disciplinary referrals, improved academic performance, and increased perception of school safety (Simonsen & Sugai, 2019).

Research has shown that schools implementing PBIS and restorative practices have seen more significant declines in suspension rates than those not implementing these models. Furthermore, the improvements in the PBIS framework were found to be most significant for Black students, with a 15% greater reduction in suspensions than White students. Sustained PBIS implementation with high fidelity over multiple years has also been associated with decreased racial discipline gaps. These findings suggest that PBIS and restorative practices can effectively reduce disciplinary actions in schools and should be considered a potential solution to address racial disparities in school discipline (Augustine et al., 2018; McIntosh et al., 2018).

Participants also expressed the need for training to embed cultural responsiveness within the PBIS framework. Mayfield and Wade (2021) emphasized the need to validate and affirm students' cultural identities within PBIS systems to build belonging. In order to do that, efficient training on culturally responsive practices is needed. Mayfield and Wade (2021) discussed training teachers on implicit bias, diverse communication styles, and culturally informed disciplinary approaches. In this way, the trainings can positively impact teachers in building their knowledge and competencies to implement culturally

responsive PBIS effectively. They can also provide concrete strategies to incorporate into their classrooms, school policies, and behavioral interventions while expanding their mindsets on behavior, discipline, and meeting student needs. Lastly, they can adopt more empathetic, holistic perspectives while recognizing and addressing their implicit biases that influence relationships with and perceptions of students.

Ko et al.'s (2021) study makes several valuable contributions around cultural bias and professional development for educators that push past surface-level coverage of bias to engage teachers in confronting systemic racism through reflective praxis, which leaves educators more confident and effective in meeting the needs of diverse student populations with differentiated support. Ko et al. (2021) also advocate the importance of collaborative inquiry, and building collective teacher efficacy is impactful during professional learning. Scaling this approach could significantly advance cultural competence and courage to have difficult conversations. Having teacher voice and leadership are positioned as integral to organizational change toward racial justice.

In summary, Ladson-Billings (2020) emphasizes that teachers need to develop cultural competence and understand their students' cultural backgrounds. The need for more training on cultural responsiveness is imperative to decrease the disparities in disciplinary actions. Ladson-Billings (2020) advocates for changing adults' mindsets and perspectives, moving away from a "deficit view" of students while "teaching the whole child" can make a difference in the discipline inequities. Having ongoing, high-quality, and personalized professional development for teachers and staff is essential for achieving a vast array of individual, institutional and systemic goals aimed at enhancing

education that empowers educators with frameworks, mindsets shifts, and skills that allow PBIS to be implemented in a more equitable, culturally responsive manner and successful way. It enables meaningful change in practice and culture.

**Relationship Building**

Ladson-Billings (2020) stresses the importance of building relationships, community, and connections in the classroom to understand their students' motivations, lives, and perspectives better. Ladson-Billings (2020) highlights the need to recognize how systemic inequities shape students' experiences. Bringing elements of youth culture into teaching provides a pathway to unleash student imagination and intellect.

Incorporating students' cultural artifacts, communication styles, and community contexts throughout instruction enables meaningful connections between school and youths' lives (Emdin, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 2020). Researchers emphasize knowing students and their families holistically as individuals before approaching content transactions, building rapport within youths' ecosystems (Emdin, 2021).

Culturally responsive PBIS requires actively welcoming diverse student identities in the classroom by involving cultural brokers like parents and community leaders in planning and leveraging relevant incentive systems (Mayfield & Wade, 2021). Merely layering superficial behavioral interventions fails to confront systemic inequities, necessitating a deeper, courageous examination of biases and assumptions (Lo et al, 2022). Trusting and humanizing relationships grounded in care and high expectations are vital precursors to marginalized student receptiveness, though often skipped (Emdin, 2021; Ladson-Billings, 2020).

Too often, compliance-centered PBIS frameworks relegate youth of color to assimilationist norms by only celebrating white middle-class ideologies versus honoring the navigational skills and resistance capital students develop in response to injustice (Lo et al., 2022; Sugai et al., 2021). Dominant society frequently misinterprets such assets as deficits or barriers. However, researchers increasingly advocate adapting PBIS tenets to center student voice/communities by using linguistically/culturally reflective materials and practices that validate youth identities (Sugai et al., 2021).

In essence, prominent thought leaders contend that substantive PBIS evolution requires shifting from marginalization to affirming a non-dominant culture (Ladson-Billings, 2020). This stance builds from tenets of culturally sustaining pedagogy calling for multidimensional understanding and dynamic cultural exchanges where power is redistributed. The scholarly consensus underscores that authentic incorporation of student voice and community contexts is an ethical imperative, not an option (Paris & Alim, 2014).

Cultural responsiveness allows PBIS to work for students of all backgrounds versus a one-size-fits-all approach. It enhances equity, reduces biases, builds stronger connections, and enables viewing behaviors through a cultural lens. This ultimately helps PBIS fulfill its purpose of teaching, rewarding positive conduct, and providing needed support while shifting mindsets away from punitive discipline towards relationship-building, skill development, and meeting needs. This helps create space for cultural perspectives to focus on the social context that aligns with examining school practices

that disadvantage or harm diverse students. Sugai et al. (2021) note that cultural responsiveness is an ongoing process requiring continued growth, not a one-time fix.

In essence, cultural responsiveness allows PBIS to work for students of all backgrounds versus a one-size-fits-all approach. It enhances equity, reduces bias, builds stronger connections, and enables viewing behaviors through a cultural lens. This ultimately helps PBIS fulfill its purpose of teaching, rewarding positive conduct, and providing needed support.

**Consistency and Structure in Expectations and Consequences**

Scherer and Ingle (2020) examined the fidelity of PBIS implementation and connections to discipline outcomes in a large urban school district. They found inconsistent fidelity across tiers of PBIS, with declines in implementation moving from Tier 1 to Tier 3. Gagnon et al. (2020) and Sugai & Simonsen (2012) suggest the importance of standardization, clarity, and structure in PBIS implementation. They suggest consistent school-wide procedures, classroom expectations, and data-driven decisions can help address discipline disparities and elicit meaningful behavioral changes. However, implementing such consistency requires dedicated leadership, ongoing professional development, and continuous self-evaluation (McIntosh et al., 2014). Customized, responsive implementation is also crucial for maintaining equitable integrity.

Pas & Bradshaw (2012) emphasize that procedural consistency across all tiers is essential for PBIS to thrive, and lapses in fidelity can severely inhibit optimal student impacts, let alone equitable ones. Therefore, researchers contend that it is essential to

sustain the initial commitment and evolve supports that are responsive to gaps revealed by data over time.

Consistency, clarity, and structure are integral to the PBIS framework in order for it to achieve behavior change and be implemented with fidelity. This level of consistency forms the foundation of an effective PBIS program. Youst & Egan (2021) note PBIS's use of consistent discipline procedures and data-based decisions as helpful for addressing disparities. Creating clarity for students on exactly what behaviors are expected and what the predictable consequences will be beneficial. It allows expectations and consequences to be well-defined across different classrooms and teachers while providing uniformity versus mixed messages. When expectations and consequences are consistent, students are much more likely to comply and take them seriously. Inconsistency breeds non-compliance. Consistency supports equity in that all students receive the same messaging and discipline for set behaviors rather than vague, arbitrary enforcement.

Every study cited in this literature evaluation described how teachers who work with children can benefit from and get support from PBIS and Culturally responsive professional development training. Teachers are not always fully equipped with the necessary training, skills, support, or understanding to deal with children from different cultures who exhibit according to the authors of this research review. The project description and implications of this project study will be and implications of this project study will be covered in the remainder of this section.

**Project Description**

The project was selected to address the teachers' perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. The results of the data analysis indicated that the participants desired additional professional development training in PBIS and culturally responsive practices to decrease the disparities in discipline. The professional development training will be presented to teachers in a midwestern school district that empowers teachers with frameworks, mindset shifts, and skills that allow PBIS to be implemented more equitably and successfully.

Attending this three-day professional development training will equip teachers with the desire for deeper training on bias and systemic change, an understanding of the PBIS framework, and valuable skills and strategies to implement in their classrooms to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. The three primary themes that emerged from the one-on-one conversations after the coding process: training, preparation, and support needs expressed for effectively implementing PBIS and culturally responsive practices, relationship building, and consistency and structure in expectations and consequences will be shared and discussed with the teachers. Administrators and support staff will also be invited to attend the three-day professional development since "support" was listed as one of the emerging themes from the data analysis.

**Needed Resources**

A space that is large enough to fit a big participant group will be needed for the professional development training. A laptop or computer, a projector, a clicker, copies of the PowerPoint, tables, chairs, and two smaller rooms for breakout sessions are among the equipment required for the three-day professional development training. A pencil box with sticky notes, markers, highlighters, and pens will be placed at the center of each table in case the educators need it during the training.

**Potential Barriers**

Some potential barriers that could make implementing a three-day professional development training for teachers across a large school district challenging:

- Cost: A multi-day PD would be expensive with trainer fees, materials, and especially substitute teachers to cover classes—significant budget commitment is needed.

- District approval to implement the three- day professional development training.

- Scheduling: It is difficult to find three full weekdays that do not conflict with other district/school events, testing, parent conferences, etc. We may need to schedule during summer or use substitutes.

- Teacher availability: Asking all teachers to commit to three full days of PD is a significant time demand. Part-time staff may have limited availability as well.

- Competing initiatives: Other simultaneous district priorities and training demands; fitting in another major PD initiative could be overwhelming.

- Implementation support: More than a single three-day PD will be required for real change; it would need ongoing coaching and support, which requires more investment.

- Administrator and teacher buy-in: Getting full stakeholder support for intensive PD based on recognizing the need for and value of the training.

- Union concerns: Teacher unions may need to approve using certain non-contract days; contract limitations around PD requirements.

- Logistics: Arranging space for large groups of teachers from multiple sites to meet, with all needed AV/tech for delivery.

With thoughtful planning, many of these barriers can be overcome, but it does require substantial investment, coordination, and stakeholder input to implement districtwide multi-day PD successfully.

**Potential Solutions**

Potential solutions to help address the barriers to implementing three-day professional development across a large school district:

- Costs: Allocate funding in the budget, seek grants, partner with local universities for discounted services, have teacher leaders provide some training.

- Discover the district's protocol for professional development proposals and follow the procedures to submit the three-day professional development training.

- Scheduling: Schedule during summer, use district professional development days strategically, and provide training in phases spread over the year.

- Teacher availability: Offer on multiple dates, use virtual sessions and provide stipends for after-school sessions.

- Competing initiatives: Integrate with/link to existing priorities, focus on long-term culture shift versus one-off training.

- Implementation support: Build in-classroom coaching, ongoing PLCs for reflection, administrator and coach training.

- Buy-in: Include teacher voice in planning, share research on effectiveness, align to school/district goals

- Union concerns: Involve the union early in planning, negotiate the use of time, and empower teachers as leaders.

- Logistics: Leverage district professional development facilities, schools, and virtual platforms to maximize options.

The key is to address barriers proactively through inclusive planning, tapping teacher leadership, creatively using time, and to recognize that long-term culture change requires sustained focus, not just a single training.

**Proposal for Implementation**

The project proposal for implementing a three-day professional development focused on addressing disproportionate discipline practices affecting African-American male students at the elementary level and the need stated by the participants in this study: Title: Transforming School Culture Through Culturally Responsive PBIS

*Overview:*

This intensive 3-day professional development will provide K-5 teachers, staff, and administrators with training on cultivating equitable school environments through culturally responsive classroom practices and schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Goals:

1. Develop participants' knowledge of implicit bias and cultural proficiency

2. Strengthen capacity to build positive relationships with students, especially African-American males

3. Enhance skills to implement culturally responsive PBIS with fidelity

Format:

- Day 1 will focus on implicit bias, restorative practices, and culturally responsive pedagogy to build cultural proficiency.

- Day 2 will provide training on trauma-informed practices, social-emotional learning, and strengthening teacher-student relationships.

- Day 3 will equip participants with skills to implement PBIS equitably, address disproportionality in discipline, and use data to monitor progress.

Each day will model the interactive, reflective learning processes participants can utilize with students. Activities will include hands-on components, storytelling, restorative circles, dialogue, and reflection activities that push past surface-level coverage of bias to engage educators in confronting systemic racism to advance cultural consciousness and

dismantle systemic inequities within schools. Administrators will also learn coaching skills to support teachers in this ongoing work.

Possible Follow Up:

- Ongoing small group PLCs to reinforce learning

- Individualized classroom coaching

- Data monitoring and PD assessment to identify additional needs

This intensive training and continued support will empower participants to build the knowledge, tools, and motivation to foster more equitable and restorative learning communities where all students can thrive. Evaluation will focus on fidelity of implementation and progress towards reducing disparities.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

I will be the facilitator for this project. I will invite the administrators to transmit the invitation to the educators, coordinate the scheduling of the three-day professional development in-service with them, tell the administrators of any potential modifications, and oversee the three-day professional development training. The duties of teachers encompass active participation and involvement, commitment, and accountability for their students' education. At the conclusion of the three-day professional development training, each educator will fill out a feedback form. I will meet with the admins to review the results after I get them back.

<div align="center">

**Project Evaluation Plan**

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A summative evaluation will be conducted to assess the outcomes and overall effectiveness of the three-day Culturally Responsive PBIS professional development

training. Summative evaluation is the process of assessing a professional development program's overall efficacy. The program's conclusion occurs when the summative evaluation is completed. Participants expressed needing more in-depth training on PBIS and culturally responsive practices to reduce disproportionate discipline rates. Thus, a three-day professional development was created to equip teachers with the desire for deeper training on bias and systemic change, an understanding of the PBIS framework, and valuable skills and strategies to implement in their classrooms to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students.

Every participant will be given a feedback survey on PD satisfaction, knowledge gains, and implementation progress. Following the three-day professional development training, the summative assessment plan (Appendix D), which includes a questionnaire and open-ended questions, is a suitable evaluation option. The evaluation will enable examining the three-day professional development training impacts of the PD on teacher competencies, practices, and experiences during the training. As Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) state: "An integral part of all professional learning is ongoing assessment of its implementation and impact. Well-designed assessments identify how training translates into improved expertise and benefits for students." The results will inform continued refinement of the PD model to maximize its effectiveness in building cultural proficiency, fostering equitable discipline practices, and reducing disparities.

Teachers, administrators, and support staff are the stakeholders in the professional development training. Since the project is designed to support teachers' professional

development, they are the primary stakeholders. The administrators are important

stakeholders as well since they have the ability to transform the buildings through

frequent coaching and continuous training. Because they will assist teachers in the

classroom, the support staff is also stakeholders in this project.

## Project Implications

There are many potential implications from this professional development project

that could lead to positive social change in education. The three-day professional

development training will enhance teachers' greater cultural competence and

responsiveness to meet student needs, leading to more inclusive and affirming learning

environments, which can lead to a significant reduction in disproportionate disciplining

of African American males at the elementary level to disrupt the preschool-to-prison

pipeline. Other implications from this project can lead administrators to become better

equipped to make equitable, unbiased discipline decisions through enhanced awareness,

families and community members collaborating more authentically with schools,

improving trust and engagement, students feeling more connected to school, boosting

attendance, academic success, and aspirations, teachers may report increased self-

efficacy, job satisfaction, and retention from learning new strategies to reach challenging

students, and school districts integrate culturally responsive PBIS into policy and

centralize training to achieve systemic equity and culturally sustaining schools.

Longitudinally, disparity-reducing practices can help close achievement gaps for

students of color. Students who feel safe, valued, and supported in schools become

empowered citizens advancing social justice. In essence, this work has immense potential

to catalyze transformational and sustainable progress toward educational equity and dismantling systemic racism. The impacts can scale out far beyond individual teachers and schools.

This project will help administrators create organizational change, and teachers to reflect upon their practices to combat the discipline disparities around our country. This project may benefit local stakeholders such as teachers and administrators in other districts based off Teachers' perceptions of how the three - day professional development training centered on PBIS and culturally responsive practices is delivered would serve as the foundation for the organizational change.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore teacher perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system in a midwestern state in the U.S. The following research questions guided this study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are teacher perceptions of the disproportionate disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S.?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What are teachers' perceptions of training, resources, and supports they need to address the disproportionate of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students?

For this basic qualitative study, I interviewed 10 teachers from six elementary schools located in a regional school system in a midwestern state in the U.S. Three

primary themes emerged from the one-on-one conversations after the coding process: training, preparation, and support needs expressed for effectively implementing PBIS and culturally responsive practices, relationship building, and consistency and structure in expectations and consequences. The professional development project, its justification, a review of the relevant literature, the project description, and its ramifications were all covered in Section 3. In Section 4, I discuss the project's strengths and limitations, recommendations for other strategies, leadership and change, project development, scholarship, reflection on the significance of the work, consequences, applications, and conclusion.

## Project Strengths and Limitations

### Project Strengths

According to the data analysis, most of the participants would like more in-depth training in PBIS and support to teach children with undesired behaviors and to learn ways to prevent the undesirable behaviors. All participants expressed that they would love training in culturally responsive practices and how they can be embedded into the PBIS framework to reduce disproportionate discipline rates. All the participants agreed that culturally responsive practices should be included in the PBIS trainings.

The professional development training encourages teachers, administrators, and support staff to collaborate through discussion, videos, individual, group, storytelling, and hands-on activities. Effective professional development for teachers should provide new knowledge and allow them to practice and reflect on what they have learned. According to Palmer and Noltemeyer (2019), this type of PD, which includes

authentic activities and dedicated time, can be highly beneficial in helping teachers

incorporate new knowledge into their teaching practices. By allowing teachers to engage

in hands-on learning experiences and providing them with opportunities to reflect on their

work, PD can help them improve their skills and ultimately support student success. After

the training, teachers will be able to collaborate with their peers while gaining new

knowledge and receive support for their new journey from administrators and support

staff. The outcomes of the data results from this study might persuade administrators to

offer further coaching and training periodically to ensure the fidelity of culturally

responsive PBIS implementation. Ultimately, the professional development training will

benefit teachers in a midwestern school district by shifting adults' mindsets and practices

that allow PBIS to be implemented more equitably and successfully to decrease the

disparities in discipline in the district.

**Project Limitations**

Potential limitations of the proposed three-day professional development on

culturally responsive PBIS include that the project is limited to the elementary level and

would not address needs at the middle or high school levels. Also, assuming teacher bias

is the primary driver of disparities, other factors like school policies contribute to the

disparities of disciplinary actions among African-American males. Another potential

limitation is having a short duration of training. Significant mindsets and practices are not

likely to be transformed in three days. Additionally, outcomes depend on consistent

implementation, and training does not guarantee application. Lastly, it will not be easy to

mandate participation without broader systemic commitment and expectations.

Awareness of these limitations can strengthen the impact of the training by addressing them proactively through design modifications and pairing training with policy changes.

<div style="text-align:center"><strong>Recommendations for Alternative Approaches</strong></div>

Recommendations for alternative approaches besides professional development to incorporate culturally responsive practices within the PBIS framework are conducting a comprehensive equity audit of current practices, policies, and data to identify areas of need and establish goals while forming a representative equity/cultural responsiveness committee with stakeholder input on enhancing PBIS implementation. Adopting alternate discipline models like restorative practices, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed care as formal alternatives can also be alternative approaches if professional development opportunities are unavailable.

Another recommendation would be to develop culturally relevant curriculum and teaching practices alongside PBIS enhancements that include peer coaching or a professional learning community model for ongoing development versus one-time training and classroom walkthrough protocols and observations to provide feedback on culturally responsive practices. Lastly, incorporating cultural responsiveness goals into teacher supervision and evaluation processes. The emphasis should be on systemic integration, cultural transformation, and sustainable structures over one-off initiatives.

These recommendations are all great alternatives for incorporating culturally responsive practices within the PBIS framework; however, according to the data analysis, the participants asked for in-depth training on culturally responsive practices. Providing the three-day professional development training to address the teachers' needs would be

beneficial to combat the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African-American male students. The key is moving from a short training event to facilitating longer-term transformative change at classroom, school, and district levels.

**Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change**

Through the rigorous process of research and development for this project, I have learned the importance of taking a measured approach to enacting lasting change. Sometimes, I needed to step back initially to understand the problem deeply and gain knowledge before developing an action plan. Conducting the literature review greatly enhanced my understanding of evidence-based practices related to reducing disciplinary disparities, guiding me through the research process. Weng et al. (2022) note, conducting a comprehensive literature review is crucial for any research study as it helps researchers to gain a deeper understanding of previous research and identify gaps in the existing knowledge, which can inform their own research and contribute to the advancement of the field. It also helps to avoid duplication of previous work and ensures that the research study builds on current knowledge.

When interviewing, I learned the importance of remaining neutral, asking probing questions for clarity, and reviewing data objectively. Although challenging at times, prioritizing objectivity was essential. Givens' (2008) states that researchers must prioritize objectivity is a crucial reminder of researchers' ethical responsibility to represent participant perspectives accurately. By setting aside their own biases and preconceptions, researchers can gain a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives in their study. By practicing objectivity

and bracketing their biases, researchers can ensure that their findings are credible, reliable, and valid and can contribute to advancing knowledge in their field.

Developing the professional development training was highly rewarding, as it directly emerged from teacher responses. I was careful to integrate a variety of learning modalities to accommodate diverse needs and learners. Macias (2020) suggests, a bottom-up approach to professional development (PD) for teachers can effectively meet their individual needs and priorities. This approach involves engaging teachers in developing their own learning goals, providing opportunities for self-directed learning, and tailoring the training to their specific contexts. By involving teachers in the planning and implementation of PD, it is more likely to be relevant, engaging, and effective. In addition, as Rowe et al. (2022) note, incorporating formative assessments into professional learning can help to monitor and enhance its effectiveness. By gathering participant feedback throughout the training, trainers can adjust improve the learning experience and ensure that teachers meet their learning goals. This feedback can also help trainers identify improvement areas and inform future PD initiatives that lead to improved student outcomes.

## Reflection on Importance of the Work

Completing this doctoral study has reinforced my identity as a lifelong learner. Overcoming obstacles throughout this experience has honed my critical thinking abilities, equipping me to spearhead positive change confidently. This study's findings confirmed for me the "why" behind some of barriers of the PBIS implementation, and it may have been an eye-opening for administrators. I hope that this project study will inspire

teachers, administrators, and support staff to embed culturally responsive practices within the PBIS framework to ensure PBIS is implemented in a more equitable, culturally responsive, and successful manner. It enables meaningful change in practice and culture.

**Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

This project has the potential for positive social change, as teachers expressed concern about the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions against African-American elementary students. Analyzing teachers' needs guided the development of professional training to address these disparities in discipline. Presenting this data analysis to administrators and staff brings awareness to the type of training teachers require to implement PBIS equitably. Sugai et al. (2021) emphasize that a culturally responsive approach is essential for promoting equity, ensuring contextual relevance, and maintaining fidelity in PBIS implementation. By considering the cultural backgrounds and experiences of students, teachers, and administrators can develop strategies that are more effective and better aligned with their needs.

This three-day training may foster a more positive, equitable school culture and reduce discipline disproportionality. Reducing the disproportionate discipline of African American males at the elementary level is an essential step in interrupting the preschool-to-prison pipeline trajectory. As Lo et al. (2022) noted, creating inclusive environments and a sense of belonging is crucial in PBIS implementation, mainly through a cultural lens aligned with historically marginalized students' needs. By providing teachers with strategies to implement PBIS in a culturally responsive way, educators can help create a

more just and equitable society where all students can access high-quality education and thrive.

Recent research shows that PBIS when appropriately implemented, "decreased racial discipline gaps by altering discriminatory policies and practices" (McIntosh et al., 2018). Teachers will be better equipped to make equitable decisions. Children benefit from affirming learning environments where "teachers connect to students' cultural backgrounds" (Samuels, 2018). Collaborating in this PD allows stakeholders to determine the next steps for ongoing training and growth. Including additional staff, voices could further refine training to address disparities comprehensively. As Goodly et al. (2022) discovered, "taking a multilevel ecological approach is critical for sustained change in school discipline." This approach recognizes that school discipline issues are complex and cannot be addressed through a single intervention or strategy. Instead, interventions should be implemented at multiple levels, including the individual, classroom, school, and community levels, to address the root causes of discipline issues and create lasting change. Schools can create a positive and supportive learning environment that promotes student success by taking a comprehensive approach involving all stakeholders, including students, families, teachers, administrators, and community members. This work has the potential for meaningful social change by empowering educators to dismantle systemic bias and racism.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this project study was to explore teacher perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary

students in a regional school in a midwestern state in the U.S. Three primary themes that emerged from the one-on-one conversations and the coding process: training, preparation, and support needs expressed for effectively implementing PBIS and culturally responsive practices, relationship building, and consistency and structure in expectations and consequences. Participants expressed a desire for deeper professional development focused on equitable PBIS and cultural responsiveness. In response, a three-day training was developed incorporating interactive activities, storytelling, videos, and practical strategies.

This doctoral project provided invaluable learning on the research process and growth as a scholar-practitioner. Conducting an in-depth literature review, analyzing data objectively, and utilizing findings to create an evidence-based intervention refined my approach tremendously. While intense, this endeavor to promote social change was rewarding. Equipping educators with research-based skills to dismantle systemic bias has the potential for meaningful impact on school culture and student outcomes. By uplifting teacher voices and priorities in designing training, this study models the power of community-engaged, culturally responsive practices for transformative actions.

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Appendix A: Participant Criteria

There is a new study about teacher perceptions of the disproportionate discipline of African American male elementary school students that could help teachers and education leaders better understand the benefits and challenges of the impact Positive Behavior Interventions Supports (PBIS) have on African American males. For this study, you are invited to describe your experiences about PBIS and using the PBIS framework in your classroom.

**About the study:**
- One 30-60-minute zoom interview that will be audio recorded (no video recording)

- To protect your privacy, the published study will not share any names or details that identify you

**Volunteers must meet these requirements:**

- Certified to teach in the state of Ohio

- Have been trained in Positive Behavior Interventions Supports (PBIS)

- Have experience implementing PBIS

- Have worked in the school district while the PBIS intervention was implemented

This interview is part of the doctoral study for Amber Hill, an Ed.D. student at Walden University. Interviews will take place during October.

Please reach out to amber.hill5@waldenu.edu to let the researcher know of your interest. You are welcome to forward it to others who might be interested.

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

The audio recorded one-on-one interview will take place on Zoom.

The timeframe is 30 minutes- 1 hour.

Introduction

Introduction of the researcher and a review of the informed consent form.

The purpose of this study is to explore teacher perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions amongst African American male elementary students located in a regional school system located in a midwestern state in the U.S.

The audio recording will be played back after the interview, and the transcription will be sent to the interviewees for accuracy.

The researcher asks interviewees if they have any questions.

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Appendix C: Interview Questions

1. How would you describe Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)?

2. Describe the type of training you received on PBIS.

3. Explain how the training you received has helped you implement PBIS in your classroom.

4. Prior to implementing PBIS, what behavior modification strategies did your school utilize to address inappropriate student behavior?

5. Do you prefer PBIS or do you prefer how disruptive behavior was dealt with prior to PBIS? Why?

6. Describe your perceptions of how the implementation of PBIS has impacted disciplinary actions such as office referrals, detentions, in school suspensions and out of school suspensions placement, in particular your African American male students.

7. Explain what components of PBIS you have found most useful within your classroom to help deal with African American male students' undesired behaviors.

8. Do you think the positive behavior support program is effective for handling African American male students' behaviors in your classroom?

9. Could the identity differences between the teacher and the student(s) be contributing to managing behaviors in classroom?

10. In your opinion, what are the benefits of using PBIS as an approach to managing

behavior in your classroom?

11. In your opinion, what are the weaknesses of PBIS as an approach to managing

behavior in your classroom?

12. Describe any modifications that may help to improve PBIS to decrease the disproportionate disciplinary rates.

13. Are you familiar with the theory culturally responsive pedagogy?

14. Describe the type of training you received on culturally responsive practices?

15. Do you think culturally responsive practices should be included in PBIS trainings? If, so do you think culturally responsive practices will decrease African American male students' behaviors in your classroom?

"This concludes the interview. Thank you for your time

Appendix D: The Project

The project was selected to address the teachers' perceptions of the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. The results of the data analysis indicated that the participants desired additional professional development training in PBIS and culturally responsive practices to decrease the disparities in discipline. The professional development training will be presented to teachers in a midwestern school district that empowers teachers with frameworks, mindset shifts, and skills that allow PBIS to be implemented more equitably and successfully.

Attending this three-day professional development training will equip teachers with the desire for deeper training on bias and systemic change, an understanding of the PBIS framework, and valuable skills and strategies to implement in their classrooms to decrease the overrepresentation of disciplinary actions among African American male elementary students. The three primary themes that emerged from the one-on-one conversations after the coding process: training, preparation, and support needs expressed for effectively implementing PBIS and culturally responsive practices, relationship building, and consistency and structure in expectations and consequences will be shared and discussed with the teachers. Administrators and support staff will also be invited to attend the three-day professional development since "support" was listed as one of the emerging themes from the data analysis.

**Title: Transforming School Culture Through Culturally Responsive PBIS**

Overview:

This intensive 3-day professional development will provide K-5 teachers, staff, and administrators with training on cultivating equitable school environments through culturally responsive classroom practices and schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Goals:

1. Develop participants' knowledge of implicit bias and cultural proficiency

2. Strengthen capacity to build positive relationships with students, especially African-American males

3. Enhance skills to implement culturally responsive PBIS with fidelity

Format:

• Day 1 will focus on implicit bias, restorative practices, and culturally responsive pedagogy to build cultural proficiency.

• Day 2 will provide training on trauma-informed practices, social-emotional learning, and strengthening teacher-student relationships.

• Day 3 will equip participants with skills to implement PBIS equitably, address disproportionality in discipline, and use data to monitor progress.

Each day will model the interactive, reflective learning processes participants can utilize with students. Activities will include hands-on components, storytelling, restorative circles, dialogue, and reflection activities that push past surface-level coverage of bias to engage educators in confronting systemic racism to advance cultural consciousness and

dismantle systemic inequities within schools. Administrators will also learn coaching

skills to support teachers in this ongoing work.

Possible Follow Up:

• Ongoing small group PLCs to reinforce learning

• Individualized classroom coaching

• Data monitoring and PD assessment to identify additional needs

This intensive training and continued support will empower participants to build the

knowledge, tools, and motivation to foster more equitable and restorative learning

communities where all students can thrive. Evaluation will focus on fidelity of

implementation and progress towards reducing disparities.

**Day 1: Building Cultural Proficiency**

8:00 - 8:30am: Welcome, PD objectives, introductions

8:30 - 10:00am: Understanding implicit bias (lecture, reflection, activities)

10:00 - 10:15am: Break

10:15am - 12:00pm: Recognizing and addressing our biases (small & large group

activity/discussion)

12:00 - 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 - 2:15pm: Cultural proficiency - knowledge, skills, mindsets (interactive lecture)

2:15 - 2:30pm: Break

2:30 - 3:45pm: Culturally responsive teaching practices (jigsaw reading activity)

3:45 - 4:00pm: Wrap up, share-outs, evaluation of Day 1

**Day 2: Relationship Building & Trauma-Informed Practices**

8:00 - 9:00am: Welcome, objectives, energizer

9:00 - 10:30am: The power of teacher-student relationships (panel, role play activity)

10:30 - 10:45am: Break

10:45am - 12:00pm: Trauma and the teenage brain (lecture, video)

12:00 - 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 - 2:15pm: Becoming trauma-informed educators (scenarios, discussion)

2:15 - 2:30pm: Break

2:30 – 3:45pm: Restorative practices - principles and strategies (lecture, practice circles)

3:45-4:00pm: Wrap up, share-outs, evaluate Day 2

**Day 3: PBIS - Data, Fidelity, & Cultural Responsiveness**

8:00 - 9:00am: Welcome, objectives, Q&A about Days 1-2

9:00 - 10:30am: PBIS 101 - Key features and misconceptions (lecture, myth vs fact activity)

10:30 - 10:45am: Break

10:45am - 12:00pm: Using data to monitor PBIS fidelity (examine case data, develop action plans)

12:00 - 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 - 2:15pm: Integrating cultural responsiveness into PBIS (jigsaw readings, discuss in groups)

2:15 - 2:30pm: Break

2:30 - 3:45pm: Addressing disproportionality proactively (lecture, equity walk tool)

3:45 - 4:00pm: Wrap up, action planning, finalize evaluations

**Three Day Professional Development PowerPoint Slides**

# My Books



# Session Objectives

**Participants will...**

- Develop participants' knowledge of implicit bias and cultural proficiency
- Strengthen capacity to build positive relationships with students, especially African-American males
- Enhance skills to implement culturally responsive PBIS with fidelity

# Day 1 Agenda

8:00 am – 8:30 am: Welcome, PD objectives, introductions

8:30 am – 10:00 am: Understanding implicit bias (lecture, reflection, activities)

10:00 am – 10:15 am: Break

10:15 am – 12:00 pm: Recognizing and addressing our biases (small & large group activity/discussion)

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 2:15 pm: Cultural proficiency – knowledge, skills, mindsets (interactive lecture)

2:15 – 2:30 pm: Break

2:30 – 3:45 pm: Culturally responsive teaching practices (jigsaw reading activity)

3:45 – 4:00 pm: Wrap up, share-outs, evaluation of Day 1

# Presentation Expectations

| Expectations | PBIS Presentation |
|---|---|
| Be Respectful | Use kind words and voice<br>One speaker at a time |
| Be Responsible | Ask questions or share<br>Actively engage and participate |
| Be a Learner | Be present<br>Follow along<br>Keep an open mind |

# Let's Check-in

If you could have any "Theme Song" what would be your theme song when you enter your building?

# Climate & Culture

**Climate** is the behaviors and points of view exhibited and experienced by student, teachers, families and the community.

**Culture** is the way thing are done in the school (the personality of a school), the underlying norms and values that shape patterns of behavior, attitudes and expectations between members of the school community.
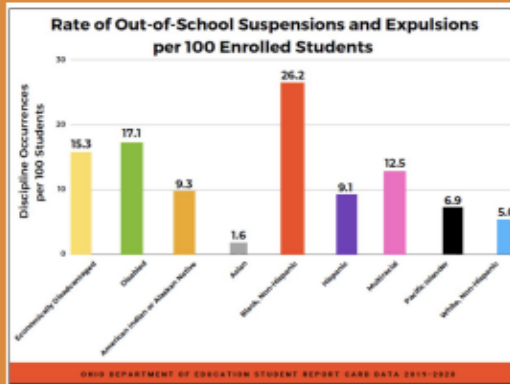
Equity efforts never focus on "adjusting" the cultures, mindsets, values, emotions, behaviors, or attitudes of people who are marginalized. They always focus on transforming conditions that marginalize people.

How Does African American Children Fit in Your School Culture

## Disproportionality within Discipline Practices

•Black boys have the highest discrepancy among all racial/ethnic and sex groups, receiving both in-school suspensions (20.1%) and out-of-school suspensions (24.9%) at rates more than three times their share of the total student enrollment (7.7%). (Office of Civil Rights, 2021).

Rate of Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions per 100 Enrolled Students

ONIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STUDENT REPORT CARD DATA 2019-2020

# What is Bias?

Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another. Usually in a way considered to be unfair.

## Being Aware of Biases

Considering bias is important to improve disciplinary infractions and learning because bias can greatly affect students academically, mentally, and socially, as well as affecting students' self-perception, confidence, and attitude toward learning.

# Being Aware of Biases

Bias can affect all of us because we are all influenced by our family, friends, upbringing, traditions, culture, and the messages our society projects through various forms of media-TV, movies, music, literature, etc.

# Our Hidden Biases

✦ Teachers often unintentionally contribute to bias in their classrooms through their pedagogical practices, curriculum choices, stereotypic expectations and assessment strategies.

✦ Teachers may not treat all students equally, with degrees of attention and expectations varying from student to student based upon biases rather than upon student needs.

What is Educational Bias Video

# What is Educational Bias

17

**Our Hidden Biases**



# Implicit Bias in Education

- Implicit bias exacerbates inequalities and creates a "vicious cycle" of racially disproportionate practices

- Research on school-age children has identified concerning trends that show how implicit bias effects teachers' instructional practices, interactions with students, school discipline, and special education eligibility and placement decisions.

## In order to improve teaching practice teachers must:

- Replace biased educational materials with materials that are inclusive, accurate, affirmative, representative, and integrated

- Bias is also part of the hidden curriculum of lessons taught implicitly to students through the everyday functioning of their classrooms, as well as through the resources chosen for classroom use.



21

# In order to improve teaching practice teachers must:

- Establish and maintain classroom environments in which the emotional, social, cognitive and cultural needs of all students are met.

- Challenge bias when they perceive it in their colleagues and students



22

# Is there any strategies you would like to add to this list?



23

# Small Group Discussion

•In what ways do you think your state and/or local program could work to reduce the role of implicit bias in the disciplinary practices programs use and in how teachers interact with African American male children?

•In what ways do you think implicit bias affects practices for African American male children?

# Circles of My Multicultural Self
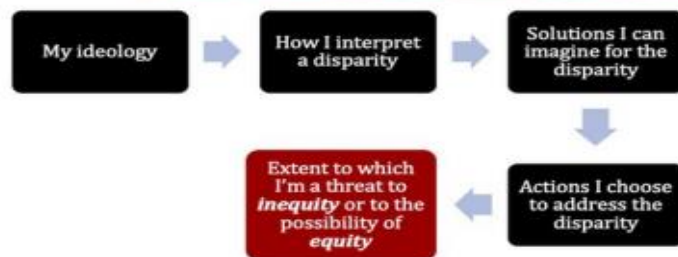
This activity requires 20-30 minutes.

**Purpose:**

The Circles activity engages participants in a process of identifying what they consider to be the most important dimensions of their own identities. Stereotypes are examined as participants share stories about when they were proud to be part of a particular group and when it was especially hurtful to be associated with a particular group.

**Preparation:**

Distribute copies of the Circles handout.



**Ideology to Action**

My ideology → How I interpret a disparity → Solutions I can imagine for the disparity → Actions I choose to address the disparity → Extent to which I'm a threat to *inequity* or to the possibility of *equity*

# Inclusion/Exclusion Activity

This activity requires 30-45 minutes.

Purpose:

Participants share their experiences as students, exploring different ways people are made to feel "included" in and "excluded" from the learning process. Topics emerging from this activity include (1) the range of learning styles and needs in any group of people, (2) the importance of reflective practice and understanding one's own socialization, and (3) the power teachers have through both implicit and explicit actions.

Divide participants into small groups of four or five.

# How To Check Your Unconscious Bias



HOW TO CHECK YOUR UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

DR. JENNIFER EBERHARDT

# Cultural Proficiency

Cultural proficiency is a way of being that allows individuals and organizations to interact effectively with people who differ from them. It is a developmental approach for addressing the issues that emerge in diverse environments.

# 5 Elements of Cultural Proficiency

1. Assess Cultural Knowledge—Principals initiate learning about their own and others' culture(s) as assets for making changes that benefit underserved students.

Practices: Culturally proficient principals advocate for linguistically and culturally diverse students' success by engaging with families, communities, and agencies as partners in the education of all students.

2. Value Diversity—Principals are inclusive of people and cultures with viewpoints and experiences different from their own for the benefit of their school and community.

Practices: Principals promote and develop mechanisms for creating a socially just school, with particular emphasis on linguistically and culturally diverse students. They continuously engage educators and parents in all aspects of their school community to collaborate on common goals and share resources.

# 5 Elements of Cultural Proficiency

3. Manage the Dynamics of Difference—Principals use problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies as ways to include multiple perspectives and to teach others about the dynamics of cultural interactions.

Practices: Principals resolve issues that occur between cultures, both within the school and between the school and its diverse communities, such as misunderstandings about school procedures and expectations. Principals also deepen school and community knowledge of educational challenges experienced by linguistically and culturally diverse students and their families. These include translation needs and migrant family work schedules.

Finally, principals actively address and resolve issues English-learning students confront, just as they would any other student group.

# 5 Elements of Cultural Proficiency

4. Adapt to Diversity—Principals use their cultural knowledge to guide school policies that achieve equitable educational and socially just outcomes.

Practices: Culturally proficient leaders find ways to meet the needs of all students, paying particular attention to linguistically and culturally diverse students. These principals help parents—and the school community—understand opportunity and achievement data. They consider divergent and often conflicting points of view regarding topics such as student grouping for instruction and using curricular materials that represent students. They also challenge local practices, such as length of time students are in language development classrooms and lack of qualified instructional staff.

5. Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge—Principals' cultural knowledge is evident in their behavior, as well as and in school policies that address educational inequities and close access, opportunity, and achievement gaps.

Practices: Culturally proficient principals advocate for equitable practices. For example, they use data to understand student needs, make sure that translation services are available when needed, and encourage both written and visual communication during home visits.

## Culturally responsive teaching practices (jigsaw reading activity)

Participants will have get in groups of 4 and begin one these readings and activities as a group. Each Group will share out at the end of the session:

"Doing One's Own Personal Work on Privilege and Oppression"- Work on Privilege and Oppression" offers

insights, readings, and strategies to begin this critically important self-reflective work.

It is also recommended that instructors review the following guides for additional insight

and context:

• Applying Dialogic Techniques (Resource Guide)

• Examining Privilege and Oppression (Activity Guide)

• Implicit Bias (Resource Guide)

• Identifying and Addressing Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture

Guide)

Implicit Bias activity, readings

# Resources

**Diversity, Equity, and Social Justice in Society**

Five Approaches to Social Justice Activism
Stages of Anti-Poverty and Anti-Classist Consciousness

How do I know if my biases affect my teaching?

WHY DIVERSITY AND EQUITY IN CONTENT MATTERS FOR READING GROWTH

The Unpleasant Truth About Equity

Closing the Opportunity Gap in Early Childhood Education

TED TALKS LIVE Short - Unconscious Bias

Why Equity Matters in Education

How does schools promote equity among students

Recognizing Bias and Promoting Equity in Early Childhood Settings

What is Equity and Why Do Our Children Deserve it? | Rodney Robinson | TEDxCharlottesville

Maurice Sykes: Building Leadership, Equity & Social Justice in Early Learning

35


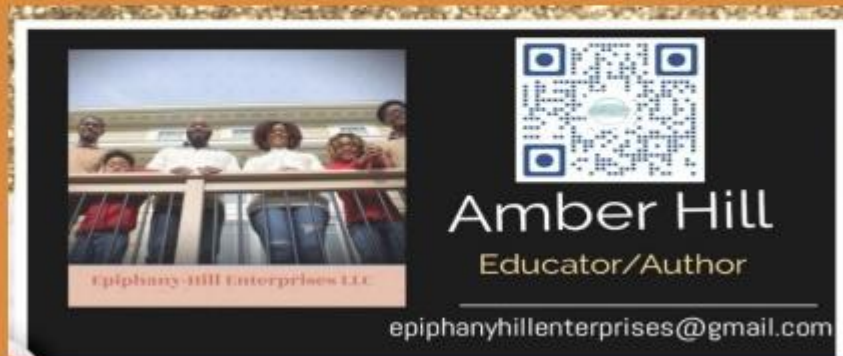THANKS FOR BEING awesome

# Feedback & Questions

**Feedback Google Form**



# Contact Information

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**Transforming School Culture Through Culturally Responsive PBIS Day 2**

## Session Objectives

Participants will...

- Develop participants' knowledge of implicit bias and cultural proficiency
- Strengthen capacity to build positive relationships with students, especially African-American males
- Enhance skills to implement culturally responsive PBIS with fidelity

### Day 2: Relationship Building & Trauma-Informed Practices

8:00 – 9:00 am: Welcome, objectives, energizer

9:00 – 10:30 am: The power of teacher-student relationships (panel, role play activity)

10:30 – 10:45 am: Break

10:45 am – 12:00 pm: Trauma and the teenage brain (lecture, video)

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 2:15 pm: Becoming trauma-informed educators (scenarios, discussion)

2:15 – 2:30 pm: Break

2:30 – 3:45 pm: Restorative practices – principles and strategies (lecture, practice circles)

3:45–4:00 pm: Wrap up, share-outs, evaluate Day 2

## Presentation Expectations

| Expectations | PBIS Presentation |
|---|---|
| Be Respectful | Use kind words and voice<br>One speaker at a time |
| Be Responsible | Ask questions or share<br>Actively engage and participate |
| Be a Learner | Be present<br>Follow along<br>Keep an open mind |

# Zoo Animal Icebreaker

# It Takes A Village Skits!

- **Staff will divide into groups of 4 by counting off by four's**
- **Once teams are established by village, each village will give their group a unique name**
- **The name has to include the word "VILLAGE"**
- **Each village will have 10 minutes to create their skit**
- **Teams can choose who will begin the skit or be assigned**

**Group 1**

Your Task

Create a school fight song that is centered around what it takes to be a village

It Takes a Village



**Group 2**

Your Task

Create a scene and create a conflict about who stole a lunch from the staff lounge. Then come up with a resolution that brings everyone together.

It Takes a Village



**Group 3**

Your Task

Create a poem centered around the theme "It takes a village". Act out the poem through dance.

It Takes a Village

# 1, 2 STEP

## Group 4

### Your Task

Create a step with at least 2 eight counts. Work together as a team to create the step centered around "It takes a village".

## Planned time for activities

- Each team will have 10 minutes to create their activity
- Each team will take 5 minutes to show their activity
- Entire presentation should be 30 minutes, excluding the relationship building questions

## Team Presentations

**Relationship Building Questions**

1. What three words best describe your village?
2. What are 3 compliments you would give to your village?
3. What was the teams best strength while creating you presentation?
4. What was the team's weakness or challenge?
5. If you could add an extra class at this school, what would it be and why?

"TEACHERS WHO PUT RELATIONSHIPS FIRST DON'T JUST HAVE STUDENTS FOR ONE YEAR; THEY HAVE STUDENTS WHO VIEW THEM AS 'THEIR' TEACHER FOR LIFE."

—Educator Justin Tarte

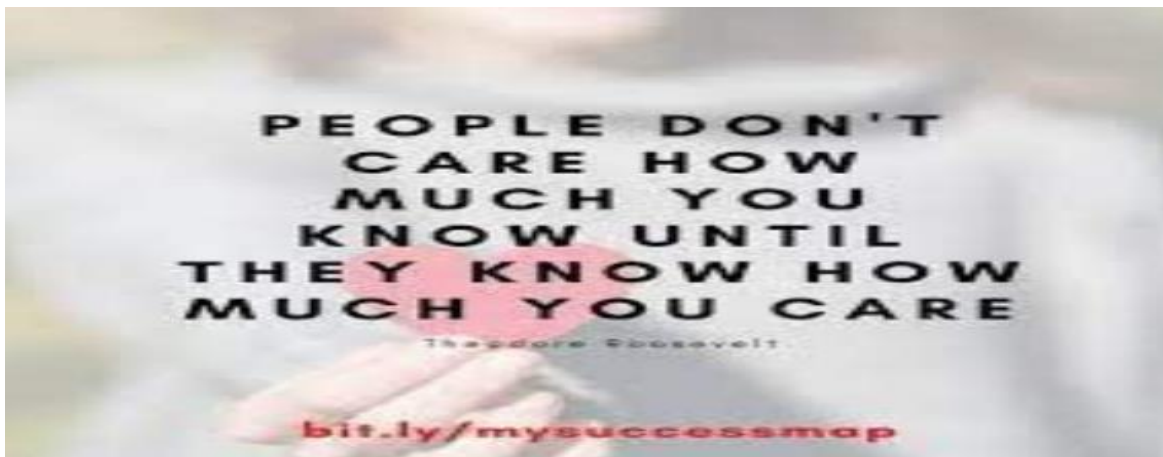#T2T

# Why Should I Build A Healthy Relationship

Healthy relationships provide:

- ❖ Safe and brave space
- ❖ Improve unhealthy behaviors
- ❖ Build motivation
- ❖ Positive interaction results in fewer behavior

# Why Should I Build A Healthy Relationship

❖ According to research, there is a 31% reduction in discipline problems in schools where staff members develop positive relationships with students (Marzano & Marzano, 2003)

❖ The best predictor of whether students will be ab to accept themselves as valuable and capable is the extent to which they have been unconditionally, accepted by others (Rogers, 1959).

PEOPLE DON'T CARE HOW MUCH YOU KNOW UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH YOU CARE

Theodore Roosevelt

bit.ly/mysuccessmap

# How to build a healthy relationship with students

❖ To build a positive relationship, you need to have more positive interactions than negative ones.

❖ Give positive feedback and praise the effort rather than the outcome.

**INTERACT**
positively with students

Every individual matters. Every individual has a role to play. Every individual makes a difference.

- Jane Goodall

## 2 x 10 Conversations

### The 2x10 relationship building strategy is simple:

❖ Spend 2 minutes per day for 10 days in a row talking with an at-risk student or staff member about anything she or he wants to talk about.

## How to build a healthy relationships

❖ Ask your students or Staff about their hobbies and interests so that you can reference their background knowledge when needed.

❖ Model the behavior you would like to see from students and staff as it relates to behavior and social skills.

BE THE TEACHER WHO IS KIND ANYWAY, SHARES ANYWAY, TRIES ANYWAY, PRAYS ANYWAY, GIVES ANYWAY, AND LOVES ANYWAY.

@BE.THE.TEACHER

Building Relationship Video

KIDS DON'T LEARN FROM PEOPLE THEY DON'T LIKE.

-Rita Pierson, TedTalk
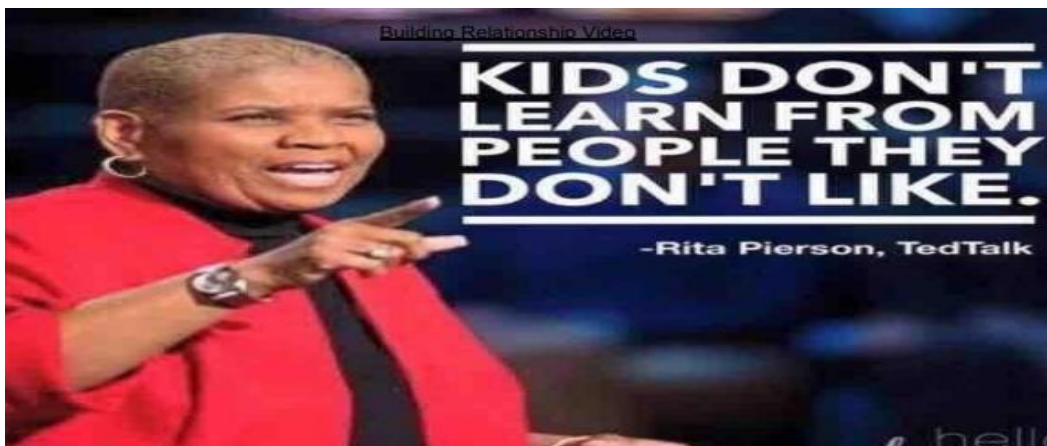
**NEVER JUDGE A CHILD BASED ON ANOTHER TEACHER'S OPINION. THEY DESERVE TO BE GIVEN A CHANCE. THEY DESERVE A CLEAN SLATE.**

**IT ONLY TAKES A SINGLE ADULT TO TURN A CHILD AROUND. THIS ADULT COULD BE YOU.**

WE TEACH LET'S TALK

# Strategies for Greeting at the Door

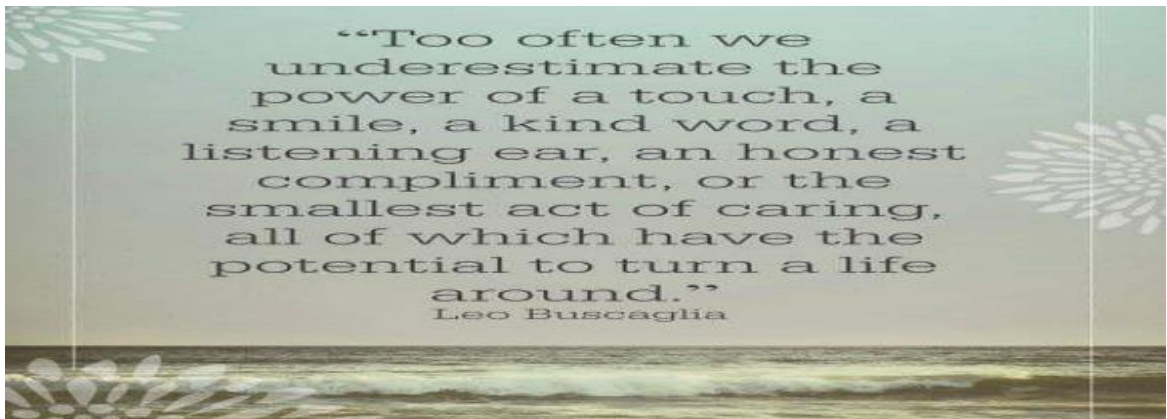CHOOSE YOUR GREETING — WAVE — HUG — FIST BUMP — HANDSHAKE — HIGH FIVE

- ❖ Greet each student by name
- ❖ Have a short positive interaction (e.g., praise, friendly comment, question)
- ❖ Direct them to the first activity
- ❖ Offer the student a choice of handshake, fist bump, high five, pinkie shake, etc.
- ❖ Provide a quiet, independent entry activity (e.g., warm-up fluency activity, easy writing task) Circulate around the room, ensuring you have a positive greeting with each student
- ❖ Train students in your class to be greeters or 'greeter leaders'
- ❖ Students along with the teacher provide a greeting to each student in the morning • Students alternate the role of greeter every month or week

# Why should we greet students at the door?

- ❖ Greeting students at the end of the day can end a student's day on a positive note as well.
- ❖ Positive interactions are especially important for students who experience family conflict, walk to school through unsafe neighborhoods, or have unmet daily needs.

"Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."
Leo Buscaglia

**POWERFUL MOTIVATION FOR TEACHERS**

## Trauma

**Traumatic Experience**

- A traumatic event is a frightening, dangerous, or violent event that poses bodily or psychological harm or is a threat to a student's life or a loved one.

# The Body's Response to Trauma

The Body's Response to Trauma

Because the primary goal of a person's brain and body is survival, when a student experiences a traumatic event—a perceived threat to their life—the brain and body react immediately and aggressively to avoid this harm by directing their energy toward keeping them alive. This puts the student into a state of anxiety and stress. Their brain hyper-focuses on the danger and is unable to think about much of anything else until it has passed.

Even when it has passed, the brain and body may remain on alert in case another threat is coming. For students who have or are experiencing frequent trauma, it becomes increasingly difficult to ever feel safe, no matter where they are or what is happening around them.
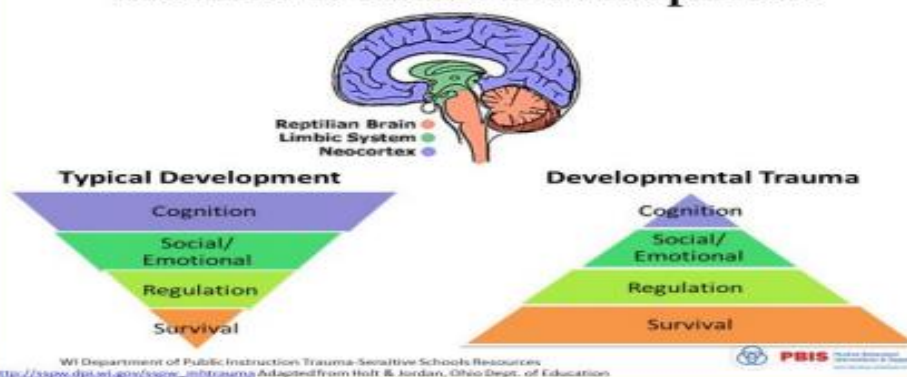
# Trauma

**Traumatic Experience**

Often interferes with relationships; self regulation; & fundamental beliefs about oneself, others & one's place in the world



## Trauma & Brain Development

Reptilian Brain
Limbic System
Neocortex

**Typical Development**

Cognition
Social/ Emotional
Regulation
Survival

**Developmental Trauma**

Cognition
Social/ Emotional
Regulation
Survival

WI Department of Public Instruction Trauma-Sensitive Schools Resources
http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_mhtrauma Adapted from Holt & Jordan, Ohio Dept. of Education

PBIS

# What does the Research Say ?

Research suggests that approximately 25% of American children will experience at least one traumatic event by the age of 16. A child's reactions to trauma can interfere considerably with learning and/or behavior at school.

# Types of Trauma

- Bullying
- Community Violence
- Complex Trauma
- Disasters
- Early Childhood Trauma
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Medical Trauma
- Physical Abuse

# Trauma Affects Learning

Adversely affects students' ability to ...
- —Acquire language & communication skills
- —Understand cause & effect
- —Take another person's perspective
- —Attend to classroom instruction
- —Regulate emotions
- —Engage the curriculum
- —Utilize executive functions
- •Make plans
- •Organize work
- •Follow classroom rules

# Trauma Affects School Performance

- Lower scores on standardized achievement tests (Goodman et al, 2011)
- Substantial decrements in IQ, reading achievement & language (Delaney-Black et al, 2002)
- 2.5x more likely to be retained (Grevstad, 2007; Sanger et al, 2000; Shonk et al, 2001)
- Suspended & expelled more often          (Grevstad, 2007; Sanger et al, 2000; Shonk et al, 2001)

# Signs of Trauma in the Classroom

- Extreme shyness and difficulty engaging with others

- Disproportionate reactions to setbacks and unexpected changes

- Trouble managing strong emotions (extreme anger, excessive crying, etc.) • Clinginess

- Difficulty transitioning from one activity to the next

- Forgetfulness

- Frequent complaints of feeling sick

# Signs of Trauma in the Classroom

Difficulty focusing

Signs of Trauma in the Classroom

- Lack of safety awareness
- Missed deadlines
- Poor academic performance
- Apathy and lack of effort
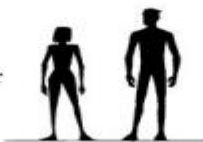- Perfectionist tendencies
- Physical and/or verbal aggression

## Trauma changes our physiology
### fight, flight or freeze response

**Noticeable Effects**
- Pupils dilate
- Mouth goes dry
- Muscles tense
- Heart pumps faster
- Breathing rate increases
- Chest pains
- Palpitations
- Perspiration
- Hyperventilation

**Hidden Effects**
- Brain prepares body for action
- Adrenaline released
- Blood pressure rises
- Liver releases glucose to provide energy for muscles
- Digestion slows or ceases
- Cortisol released (depresses immune system)

WI Department of Public Instruction Trauma-Sensitive Schools Resources
http://sspw.dpi.wi.gov/sspw_mhtrauma

PBIS

## What if this bear walked into this room right now?

How are you feeling?

What are you going to do?

—Flee?

—Fight?

—Freeze?

Are you listening to the presentation?

Critical learning — to many students impacted by trauma, adults are "bears" that sometimes are very dangerous

# Ways to Deal With Trauma

1. Find out what they love to do and experience joy?

2. Ask your students what they are looking forward to?

3. Teachers need to be predictable and consistent.

4. Trace your students hand and put a small box on top of each finger. Inside each box, write a coping skill they can use if they

feel they need one. It will be individualized for each student.

5. Don't yell at the student in the middle of their breakdown.

# Ways to Deal With Trauma

6. Breathing strategies. Teach different ways to do breathing.

7. Build a welcoming ritual that you do every morning when greeting your students.

8. Check in system in the classroom (ex. Zones of Engagement).

9. The wrong choice I made was _____. Have a checklist list below that the students can check that they are going to try to achieve.

10. Relax your face when dealing with students during a breakdown.

# Coping with Trauma

Anxiety

Nightmares

Irritability

Flashbacks

Guilt/Shame

**Symptoms of Stress & Trauma**

Hypervigilance

Helplessness

Depression

Anger

Rage

# Small Group Discussion

•In what ways do you think your building practices affect how African American male children interact with Staff?
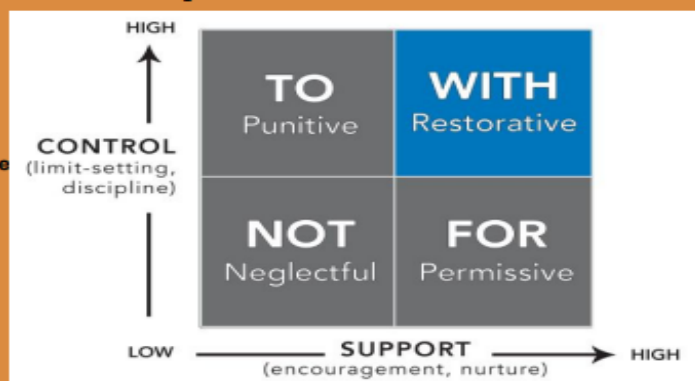
# Restorative Practices

- The fundamental hypothesis of restorative practices is that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things **with** them, rather than to them or for them.

- The aim of restorative practices is to **develop community** and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and restoring relationships.

- Restorative practices is the science of relationships!

# Social Discipline Window

- **Do to... Punitive**
- **Do With... Restorative**
- **Not do... Neglectful**
- **Do for... Permissive**

HIGH

CONTROL
(limit-setting, discipline)

| TO | WITH |
| Punitive | Restorative |
| NOT | FOR |
| Neglectful | Permissive |

LOW — SUPPORT → HIGH
(encouragement, nurture)

# SOCIAL DISCIPLINE WINDOW ACTIVITY

In small groups of 3 or 4:

Talk about a time when someone in a position of authority treated you restoratively.

What was that experience like for you?

What was it specifically that made it restorative?

What can YOU do to be more purposeful in your practice?

## Practitioner Styles

Which box would you be operating in if you said to a student/young person:

- Sit down and shut up.

- You really only have to do it if you want to.

- I don't care what you do — sort it out yourself.

- You are aware of the expectations in this class.

- How can I support you in reaching them?

## Practitioner Style Activity

In your groups, identify the behaviors you would likely observe if a practitioner's style was predominantly:

- Punitive

- Permissive

- Neglectful

- Restorative

What learning outcomes would each style deliver?

## Punitive Practitioner Style

### Observed Behavior:

- Often uses a tone of voice that blames or accuses

- Lack of support in directions

- Notices inappropriate behavior more than appropriate

- Frequently gets immediate compliance

### Has high standards Likely Outcomes:

- Ordered classroom/setting

- Anxious, resentful students/young people

- Short-term compliance but rarely lasting behavioral change

- High teacher/practitioner stress

- Negative classroom atmosphere

## Permissive Practitioner

### Observed Behavior:

- Warm and supportive
- Doesn't consistently set limits
- Focuses on effort and de-emphasizes quality  Tries to reason with people to behave or respond
- Makes excuses for others' behavior

### Has high standards Likely Outcomes:

- Students/young people feel liked and supported
- Chaotic, out-of-control classroom/setting
- Students/young people do not feel secure in the teacher's capacity to "manage"
- Poor work quality
- Students/young people feel anxious and uncertain
- High teacher/practitioner stress

## Neglectful Practitioner

### Observed Behavior:

- Lacks consistent engagement
- Does not appear concerned about quality of students' work
- Ignores inappropriate behavior
- Uses only video and worksheets to teach

### Has high standards Likely Outcomes:

- May miss warning signs of academic or behavioral difficulties in students
- Students may withdraw and feel worthless
- Increased acting out in order to get the teacher's attention or because there is no sense of order or control in classroom
- Limited meaningful learning taking place
- High teacher/practitioner stress

## Restorative Practitioner Style

### Observed Behavior:

- Engaging content delivery
- Clear and written objectives and goals
- Affective language
- Engages in collaborative conversations
- Engages everyone in decision making
- Circles
- Has high standards

### Has high standards Likely Outcomes:

- Positive atmosphere
- High quality work output
- Positive, kind, and supportive relationships
- Sense of hope and optimism
- Effective classroom management
- Students/young people feel sense of safety
- High job satisfaction

## Fair Process: The Central Idea

"...individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems – whether they themselves win or lose by those systems – when fair process is observed."

(W. Chan Kim & Renee Mauborgne, Harvard Business Review, January 2003)

. **Engagement** – Having the opportunity to have a say

. **Explanation** – Understanding the reasons for the decision

. **Expectation Clarity** – Shared understanding on what is expected in terms of behavior and rules

# What Fair Process Isn't

- **Decision by consensus**

- **Does not set out to achieve harmony**

- **Does not set out to win people's support through compromises that accommodate every individual's opinions, needs, or interests**

- **Democracy in your system**

- **Leaders forfeiting their responsibility to make decisions or establish policies and procedures**

## Fair Process: What it Achieves

- **Builds Trust**

- **Voluntary Cooperation**

- **Drives Performance**

- **Beyond Duty**

- **Knowledge Sharing**

# Community Circles



- Tier 1 Restorative Practice/Tier 1 PBIS
- Also known as Proactive Circles
- Meant to intentionally build connection, community, and a sense of belonging
- Creates space to lifts barriers
- Provides opportunities for collaboration and mutual understanding

# Circles & Community



- "There can be no vulnerability without risk; there can be no community without vulnerability; there can be no peace, and ultimately no life without community, - *M. Scott Peck*

- "Circles create soothing space, where even reticent people can realize that their voice is welcome" - *Magaret J. Wheatley*

- "If people stand in a circle long enough, they'll eventually begin to dance." - *George Carlin*

# Let's Chat



- What is your experience with circles?
- Tell about a time in your life when you have been in circles.
- What do you see as the benefits of circles?
- What excites you about circles?
- What hesitations do you have about circles?

166

## Common Barriers

It takes too long for students to get into a circle.

- Use a timer and build in an incentive for meeting time expectation
- Have students sit on top of desks in a circle
- Have students stand around the furniture in a circle
- Ask the students to come up with suggestions
- The more often you do circles the more it will become a routine for students

## Common Barriers

The circle process takes too long.

- You can do a check-in circle in a few minutes with 30 students. You can ask for a one or two word check-in around how students are feeling or what they did over the weekend
- Time spent up front building relationships and coming up with shared values and norms will save time dealing with problem behavior on the back end

## Common Barriers

Students may talk about private family issues, abuse, suicide, drugs or alcohol

When using Circles keep in mind that 80% of the time they should be proactive. This type of Circle should utilize low risk questions and prompts that will unlikely elicit such responses.

- When starting a circle, clarify with students what types of things you are required to report
- Clarify the limits of confidentiality – anything that threatens the safety of self or others
- Consult with administrators, counselors or other mental health professionals for guidance as needed

# Common Barriers

There are specific behaviors that derail the circle.

- Revisit the shared guidelines that were created together
- Provide leadership opportunities for students misbehaving, allowing them to think of questions and facilitating the circle
- Allow students to express how they are being impacted by the misbehavior in the circle
- Have 1:1 conversations with students to identify root causes of behavior

# Common Barriers

Students make rude or mean facial expressions.

- Clarify unacceptable non-verbal behavior as not following circle guidelines
- Acknowledge respectful non-verbal behaviors
- Allow students to identify and reflect on what unacceptable non-verbal behaviors look like

# Common Barriers

No one is talking or English is a second language for my students and they are hesitant to speak

- Allow students to brainstorm topics they would like to discuss or are interested in
- Start with low level questions that don't require a great deal of vulnerability

- Use alternate forms of expression such as drawing, movement, poses, or activities with no words
- Translate the question into their language and post on the smartboard
- At first it is ok not to share as long as everyone participates by being present in the circle
- Try to set a fun community building tone
- Specifically acknowledge and praise students for bravery and stepping out of their comfort zone

## Why Circles

- ✓ **Equality** ~ everyone in the circle has equal seating
- ✓ **Equity** ~ everyone has the opportunity to speak and be heard
- ✓ **Safety & Trust** ~ you can see everyone in the circle
- ✓ **Responsibility** ~ everyone plays a role
- ✓ **Facilitation** ~ reminds you to facilitate rather than lecture
- ✓ **Ownership** ~ participants have a shared feeling that the circle is theirs
- ✓ **Builds Connections** ~ listening and learning from everyone's responses

## Types of Circles

We need to facilitate circles deliberately and thoughtfully with certain goals in mind

- Proactive: Community Building
- Responsive: Repairing Harm
- Sequential: easiest, most controlled to run
- Non-Sequential: allows freedom

## Proactive Circles

- Accounts for 80% of the circles that are done within a setting.

- Are intentional and can allow for participants to take risks as the community strengthens.

- Build trust and social capital.

- Include but are not limited to: creating norms, community building, course content, and games.

## Sequential Circles

- There are typically specific questions that are answered, in order, around the circle.

- Participation is expected, although not always required.

- A "talking piece" can be used to help provide additional structure.
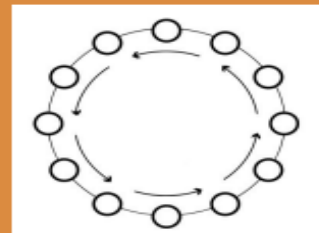
# Non-Sequential Circles

- Can feel less controlled but have benefits in situations.
- There is no particular order for people speaking.
- Expectations for participation are more relaxed.
- Can be:
  - Structured
  - Loosely structured – Does anyone want to share their reaction to the activity we just did?" or: "Who needs help today to finish their project?
  - Unstructured – activities that allow participants to self-identify the topics they would like to discuss, although the facilitator may set parameters at the outset.
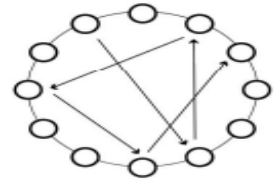
# Concentric Circles

- Structured community building circle, review academic concepts.

- Promotes equitable voice.

- Conversations are guided by questions or prompts.

- The noise level may be loud because multiple people are speaking at once.

- Facilitator utilizes an attention getting signal to regain the groups' attention.
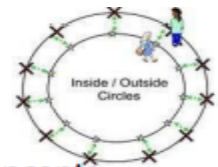
# General Circle Format

1. Opening
2. Guidelines / Values
3. Introduction of Talking Piece
4. Check-In
5. Discussion Rounds
6. Check out
7. Closing

## Introduce the Concept

let's get
**STARTED**

- Explain your reasoning/purpose of the circle
  - Understanding your rationale will help put students at ease as this is new and may be uncomfortable for them
- Be upbeat and positive
- View resistance as fear and discomfort rather than a desire to be defiant

### Circle Guidelines

- Respect the Talking Piece
  (everyone listens, everyone has a turn)

- Speak from the heart ❤

- Listen from the heart ❤
  (let go of judgements)

- Trust that you will know what to say (no need to rehearse)

- Say just enough
  (without feeling rushed)

**Purpose:** to allow Circle participants to identify and agree upon shared guidelines for the circle.

It's very important to convey the importance of, and hold participants accountable to the guidelines as they directly impact the success of the circle.

## Secrets to Success

- Clear topic and goal
- Set a positive tone
- Keep the focus
- Get some allies
- Use silence
- Active listening
- Pay attention to body language

**Secrets of Success**

# Circle Lesson Plan

- **Type of Circle:** Proactive (sequential or nonsequential)
- **Purpose/Goal of Circle:** To ensure all community members have a voice in the creation of norms.
- **Circle Questions:**
    - Think about a positive working/learning environment and describe it in a few words.
    - What will contribute to a healthy and productive learning/working environment?
    - What norms can we agree to that will contribute to a healthy and productive learning/working environment? (List the norms.)
    - How will we share these norms with others who join the group?
    - Share one thing you will do to contribute to maintaining the norms.

# Circle Demonstration

- Introduce the talking piece and the guidelines
- Form a circle (standing or sitting)
- Ask participants a fun and personal low-risk question that anyone could answer in one or two words

# Circle Demonstration

Now it's your turn!

In your group, each participant will take a turn leading discussion round.

# Circle Resources & References

- Circles Guide (CCS)
- Barriers in Circles
- IIRP

Transforming School Culture Through Culturally Responsive PBIS Day 3

# Session Objectives

**Participants will...**

- Develop participants' knowledge of implicit bias and cultural proficiency
- Strengthen capacity to build positive relationships with students, especially African-American males
- Enhance skills to implement culturally responsive PBIS with fidelity

## Day 3: PBIS – Data, Fidelity, & Cultural Responsiveness

8:00 – 9:00 am: Welcome, objectives, Q&A about Days 1-2

9:00 – 10:30 am: PBIS 101 – Key features and misconceptions (lecture, myth vs fact activity)

10:30 – 10:45 am: Break

10:45 am – 12:00 pm: Using data to monitor PBIS fidelity (examine case data, develop action plans)

12:00 – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00 – 2:15 pm: Integrating cultural responsiveness into PBIS (jigsaw readings, discuss in groups)

2:15 – 2:30 pm: Break

2:30 – 3:45 pm: Addressing disproportionality proactively (lecture, equity walk tool)

3:45 – 4:00 pm: Wrap up, action planning, finalize evaluations

# Presentation Expectations

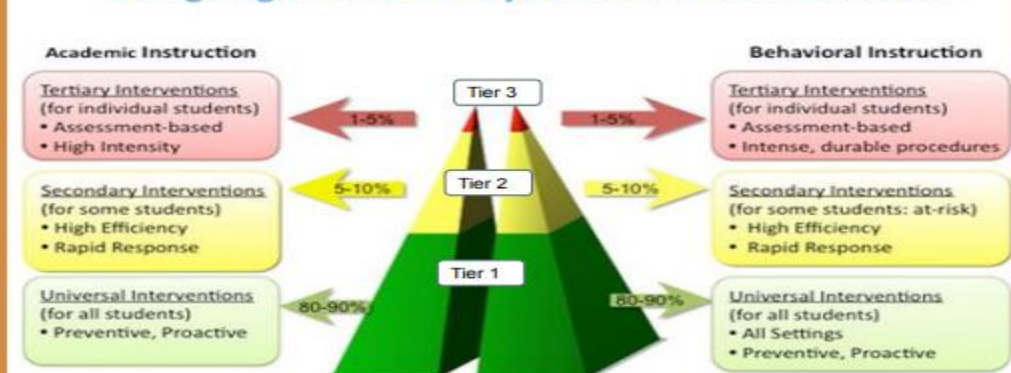| Expectations | PBIS Presentation |
|---|---|
| Be Respectful | Use kind words and voice<br>One speaker at a time |
| Be Responsible | Ask questions or share<br>Actively engage and participate |
| Be a Learner | Be present<br>Follow along<br>Keep an open mind |

# MTSS, Not Just For Academics

## Multi -Tiered System of Supports

- ❖ Response to Intervention (RTI)
- ❖ Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)
- ❖ Professional Development
- ❖ SEL/Restorative Practices/Trauma Informed Care
- ❖ Family Engagement
- ❖ Attendance
- ❖ Curriculum Design
- ❖ Professional Development
- ❖ School/Community Collaboration
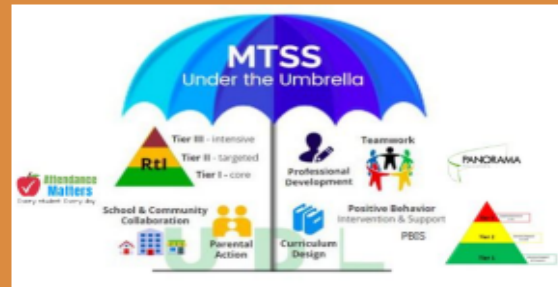
# Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

## Designing Schoolwide Systems for Student Success

**Academic Instruction**

Tertiary Interventions
(for individual students)
• Assessment-based
• High Intensity

Secondary Interventions
(for some students)
• High Efficiency
• Rapid Response

Universal Interventions
(for all students)
• Preventive, Proactive

**Behavioral Instruction**

Tertiary Interventions
(for individual students)
• Assessment-based
• Intense, durable procedures

Secondary Interventions
(for some students: at-risk)
• High Efficiency
• Rapid Response

Universal Interventions
(for all students)
• All Settings
• Preventive, Proactive

Tier 3  1-5%
Tier 2  5-10%
Tier 1  80-90%

# Why PBIS?

**National/Federal Level:**
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 emphasizes POSITIVE Behavior Support services as part of a student's individual curriculum.

**State Level:**
In 2013, the Ohio State Board of Education approved Rule 3301-35-15:
- ○ *"Each school district shall implement Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports on a system-wide basis".*

**Midwest District Bylaws & Policies 5630.01**
- Midwest district believes the school environment should be one that ensures the care, safety, and welfare of all students and staff members. Efforts to promote positive interactions and solutions to potential conflict should be exhaustive.

http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/PBIS-Resources

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# Common PBIS Myths

- PBIS will **NEVER** work with high school students.

- PBIS is **ONLY** about developing **rewards and "bribing"** students.

- PBIS is **ONLY** about student behavior.

- PBIS means that schools **ABANDON DISCIPLINE.**

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# What is PBIS?

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidenced based, tiered framework for supporting *students'* behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health. PBIS works towards:

- ◆ **Common language**
- ◆ **Common practice**
- ◆ **Consistent application**

# Fundamental Purpose of PBIS?

❖ The fundamental purpose of PBIS is to make schools more effective, efficient and equitable learning environments.

❖ School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports is a framework for teaching expected social and behavioral skills so that the focus can be on teaching and learning in a positive, preventative school environment.

| Predictable | Consistent | Positive | Safe |

# What Does PBIS Emphasize?

❖ Adult **PRACTICES** that support positive <u>student</u> behavior

❖ **SYSTEMS** that support <u>staff</u> behavior

❖ **DATA** about behavior to support decisions

PBIS isn't about making perfect students, it's about making perfect environments where students feel safe to grow.

-- Said the PBIS Coach

# What Does Tier 1 PBIS Look Like?
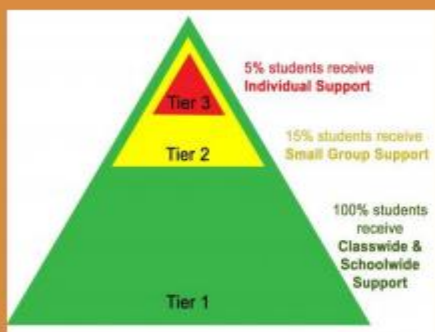


- ❖ Clearly Defined Behavior Expectations/Standards (all settings/classrooms)

- ❖ Process for teaching/refreshing ALL staff (custodians, IAs, secretaries, etc.) and ALL students the expected behaviors, systems, etc.

- ❖ Procedures for recognizing and acknowledging positive behavior for students and staff

- ❖ Policies and procedures for discouraging challenging behaviors

- ❖ Data Based Decision Making

# PBIS Tier 1: School-Wide Expectations

## Video: Why Teach Expectations?

- ❖ 3-5 positively stated expectations
- ❖ Define what you WANT
- ❖ Core values of the social culture
- ❖ Defined with input from faculty, families, and students
- ❖ For all areas/activities, including arrival, cafeteria, classrooms, hallways, events, recess, etc.
- ❖ Posted in all areas of the school (visual reminders)
- ❖ Taught, practiced, modeled and re-taught.
- ❖ Defined as observable behaviors
- ❖ State what you DO, not who you ARE.
- ❖ Selected and presented with cultural sensitivity

Be Respectful.
Be Responsible.
Be Safe.
Be KIND.
"That's the Gator way!"

# Why Post Expectations?

## Rules of the Road . . .

- Posted expectations are like posting speed limits on the highway.

# School-wide Expectations
*Sample Student Matrix HS*

### World Language Middle School
### PBIS Matrix/Core Values for Students

| EXPECTATIONS | CLASSROOM | HALLWAY/RESTROOM | CAFETERIA/RECESS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Be Responsible** | • Do your own work<br>• Engage in learning<br>• Track your data | • Use your own locker<br>• Keep to the right<br>• Plan ahead for classes<br>• Hoods down & hats off in the hallway and in common areas | • Clean your messes<br>• Stay in the cafeteria/recess area<br>• Stay seated |
| **Be Respectful** | • Polite language<br>• Be encouraging<br>• Be positive and kind when online | • Polite language<br>• Be positive<br>• Be aware of your surroundings<br>• Return to class promptly | • Polite language<br>• Be kind<br>• Use good manners |
| **Be Ready** | • Be on time<br>• Have your classroom materials<br>• Chromebooks are charged<br>• Be engaging in learning<br>• Positive mindset | • Have your hall pass<br>• Memorize your locker combo<br>• Use time wisely | • Phone on silent<br>• Use time wisely |

# Example of Common Area Posters



# PBIS Tier 1: Feedback & Acknowledgement System: *Rationale*

❖ Focuses attention on desired behaviors
❖ Increases the repetition of desired/new behaviors
❖ Fosters a positive class climate
❖ Reduces amount of time spent on discipline
❖ Increases instructional hours
❖ Builds positive relationships with students

Feedback & Acknowledgement Examples



# Feedback & Acknowledgement in Everyday Life

❖ Merit pay and performance bonuses

❖ Incentives for participating in healthy behaviors

❖ Dress-Down Fridays

❖ Good driver discounts



# Time to Share

## Questions:

1. How does your building acknowledge student behavior? (feedback and acknowledgement system, activities, events, etc.)
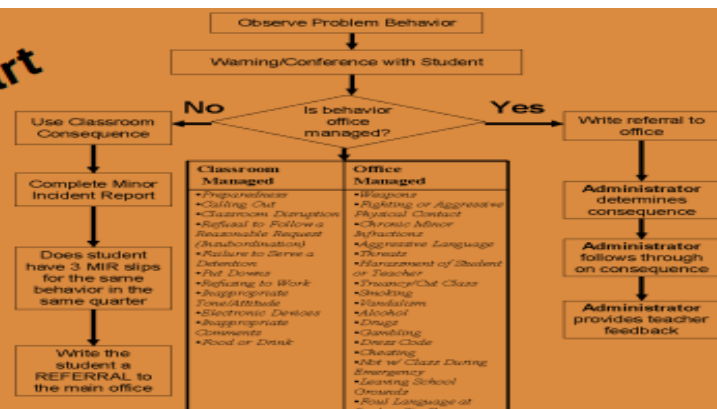2. How does your building acknowledge staff?

**Let's Talk**

1. Have you seen your discipline flow chart?

2. What are some positive strategies that your building uses to manage behaviors?

3. What disparities do you see in your building data?

# PBIS Tier 1: Data-based Decision Making

❖ Tier I PBIS team reviews and uses discipline data and academic outcome data at least monthly for decision-making.
❖ Shares data with staff at least quarterly, shares data with students

## The "BIG 5"
The average number of referrals:
❑ Per day per month
❑ By Type of Behavior
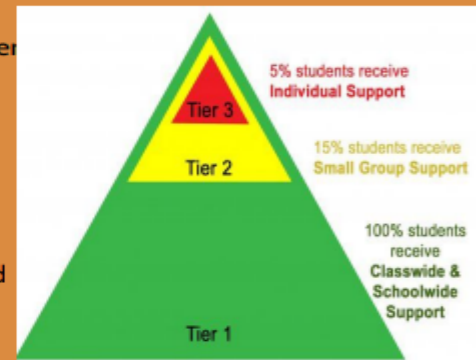❑ By Location
❑ By Time of Day
❑ By Student
*Other data points may include by grade level and gender

When students can't read, we teach them. When students can't write, we teach them. So when students can't behave, **why do they get put in the hall?**

# What Does Tier 2 PBIS Look Like?

❖ Tier 2 practices and systems provide targeted support for students who are not successful with Tier 1 supports alone. **(10-15% of students)**
❖ The focus is on supporting students who are at risk for developing more serious problem behavior before they start.
❖ Tier 2 supports often involve interventions with groups of students participating.
❖ Specific Tier 2 interventions include evidence based practices such as social skills groups, self-management, and academic supports.



5% students receive **Individual Support**

15% students receive **Small Group Support**

100% students receive **Classwide & Schoolwide Support**

Tier 3
Tier 2
Tier 1

# Office Discipline Referrals May Not Be Enough....



❖ May not identify students with severe "internalizing" behaviors

❖ May not identify students with many "minors" but few "majors"

❖ May not reflect that some teachers refer and some don't
[1} Kincaid, Childs, & Putnam, October, 2007

# Reasons Students Commonly Misbehave

❖ Student(s) do not know the expectations
❖ Student(s) do not know how to exhibit expected behavior
❖ Student is unaware he/she is engaged in the misbehavior
❖ Misbehavior is providing student with desired outcome:
   ■ Obtaining attention from adults/peers
   ■ *Escape from difficult task or non-desired activity*

## Understanding the Most Common Functions of Behavior

### Get/Obtain:
- Attention (Adult/Peer)
- Preferred Activity
- Tangible Item
- Sensory Input (Auditory, Tactile, etc)

### Escape/Avoid:
- Demand/Request
- Task/Activity (Difficult/Boring)
- Reprimand/Consequence
- Person/Attention (Peer/Staff)
- Sensory Input

**NO BAD KIDS**, just impressionable, conflicted young people wrestling with **emotions & impulses**, trying to communicate their **feelings & needs** the only way they know how.

- Janet Lansbury

## Examples of Tier 2 Interventions:

All of these examples assume the following conditions

- No more than 5-8 students
- 20+ minutes for ≥ 2-3 days/week
- Progress monitoring at least biweekly

### Behavior
- Check-In/Check-Out
- Social Skills Group
- Structured Lunch Bunch

Beneath every behaviour there is a **feeling.** And beneath each feeling is a **need.** And when we meet that need rather than focus on the behaviour, we begin to deal with the **cause** not the symptom.
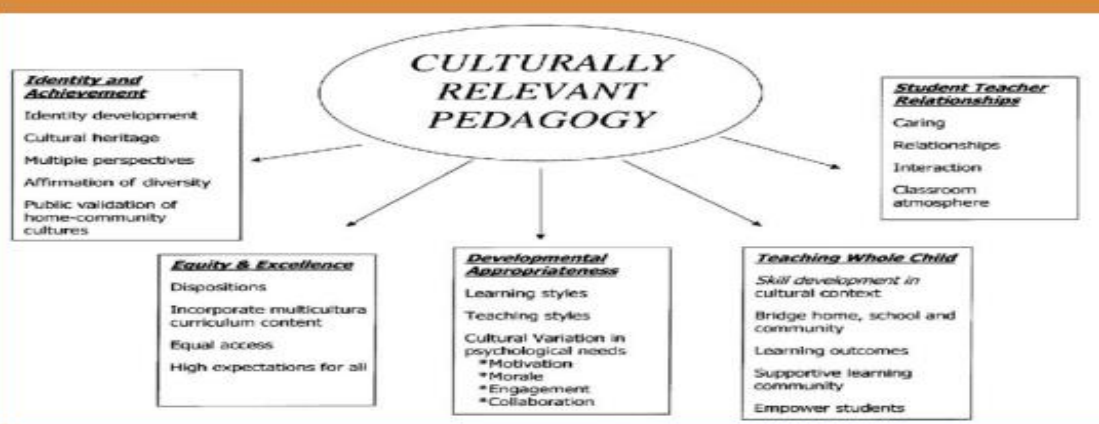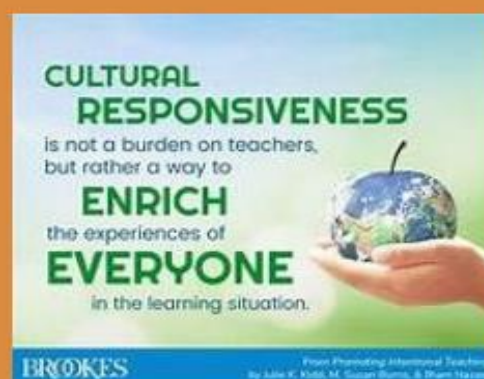
@RaisingHumansKind

# What's Your Role In PBIS?

- ❖ If possible, become a member of the PBIS team
- ❖ Learn the building's school-wide expectations and feedback & acknowledgment system
- ❖ Participate in the feedback and acknowledgement system (points, tickets, etc.)
- ❖ Understanding Data - utilize to inform practice
- ❖ Know your school's discipline policies and procedures (flow chart)
- ❖ Ask Questions

**T** ogether
**E** veryone
**A** chieves
**M** ore

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# Definitions for Culturally Responsive Practices

- ❖ Culture
- ❖ Pedagogy
- ❖ Culturally Responsive Teaching

**CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS** is not a burden on teachers, but rather a way to **ENRICH** the experiences of **EVERYONE** in the learning situation.

BROOKES

From Promoting Intentional Teaching by Julie K. Kidd, M. Susan Burns, & Ilham Nasser

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**CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY**

**Identity and Achievement**
Identity development
Cultural heritage
Multiple perspectives
Affirmation of diversity
Public validation of home-community cultures

**Student Teacher Relationships**
Caring
Relationships
Interaction
Classroom atmosphere

**Equity & Excellence**
Dispositions
Incorporate multicultural curriculum content
Equal access
High expectations for all

**Developmental Appropriateness**
Learning styles
Teaching styles
Cultural Variation in psychological needs
*Motivation
*Morale
*Engagement
*Collaboration

**Teaching Whole Child**
Skill development in cultural context
Bridge home, school and community
Learning outcomes
Supportive learning community
Empower students

# What is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

❖ Culturally responsive teaching is using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students.

What is Culturally Responsive Pedagogy?
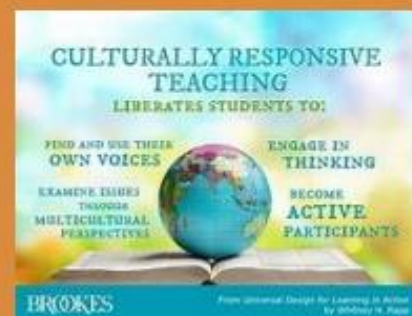
adaptivex

# Culturally Responsive Teaching?

- Builds on what students already know.
- Helps students understand there is more than one way knowing.
- Encourage students to embrace their culture and develop a love of learning.
- Highlights students' strengths, and give them confidence to confront their weaknesses.

# What is the Goal of Culturally Responsive Teaching?

"The goal of culturally responsive teaching is to create a learning environment conducive to all student, no matter their ethnic, cultural, or linguistic backgrounds."

Frey, 2010

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING
LIBERATES STUDENTS TO:

FIND AND USE THEIR OWN VOICES

ENGAGE IN THINKING

EXAMINE ISSUES THROUGH MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

BECOME ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

BROOKES

## Thoughts on Cultural and Linguistic Competency

Culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning .

—Gloria Ladson Billings (University of Wisconsin)

Educators have a moral and ethical responsibility to help all children reach their potential . . . No child should sit on the margins, feeling either physically or socially isolated from the rewards of learning and educational challenge

—Donna Ford (University of Virginia)

# Small Group Discussion

What are implications for your school to create a culturally responsive environment?  The Grows and Glows?

## Barriers ?

## Challenges?

## Benefits ?

# Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Teachers are culturally responsive when they:
- Hold all students to high standards.
- Make learning challenging.
- Engage all learners.
- Have an understanding and incorporate students' various cultural backgrounds.
- Make connections between classroom and the world beyond.

# Culturally Responsive Teaching

•*Culturally responsive teaching reflects democracy at the highest level. It means doing whatever it takes to ensure that every child is achieving and ever moving towards realizing her or his potential* — Joyce Taylor Gibson (University of Massachusetts)

•*Schools must take a serious look at their curriculum, pedagogy, and hiring practices and all other policies that create a school climate that is either empowering or disempowering . . .*

—Sonia Neto (Association of Independent Schools of South Australia)

# Small Group Discussion

# Brainstorm how you might apply some principles of CRT in your PBIS schoolwide and classroom systems?

# Culturally Responsive School Environments

- Use students culture and experiences not not part of mainstream culture as a scaffold to learning.
- Use instructions that involves matching the knowledge of particular groups with the learning environment.
- Embrace a strength based perspective.
- Engage all learners.
- Knows that failure of any student is not an option.
- Creates an environment that reflect cultural and linguistic diversity.
- Enacts instruction through different learning styles

## According to Gloria Ladson Billings Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) is:

An approach that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impact knowledge, skills and attitudes

## In Gloria Ladson Billings's 1994 Book "Dreamkeepers"define CRT as possessing these 9 principles of :

- Communication of High Expectations
- Active Teaching Method
- Teacher as Facilitator
- Inclusion of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Reshaping the Curriculum
- Student- Controlled Classroom Discourse
- Small Group Instruction and Academically Related Discourse
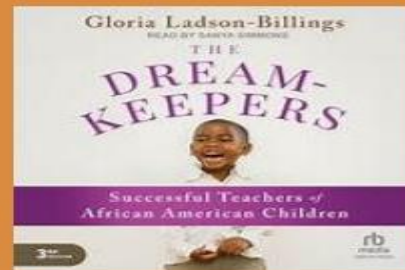
## Building a Culturally Responsive Environment Requires...

- Dialogue on race/ethnicity and culture
- Caring
- Analyzing school climate-who feels comfortable and safe?  Who feels uncomfortable and unsafe?
- Continuously analyze behavior and student achievement data
- Professional Development on cultural responsiveness, restorative practices, trauma informed practices, and social emotional learning.

# Privilege Walk Activity



# Data Equity Walk (45-90 Minute Activity)

- Participants will dive into their building data that shows education outcomes and exposes gaps between groups of students.

- Participants explore the data individually before collectively discussing implications and identifying solutions to address disparities and improve outcomes

# Resources

How do I know if my biases affect my teaching?

WHY DIVERSITY AND EQUITY IN CONTENT MATTERS FOR READING GROWTH

The Unpleasant Truth About Equity

Closing the Opportunity Gap in Early Childhood Education

TED TALKS LIVE Short – Unconscious Bias

Why Equity Matters in Education

How does schools promote equity among students

Recognizing Bias and Promoting Equity in Early Childhood Settings

What is Equity and Why Do Our Children Deserve it? | Rodney Robinson | TEDxCharlottesville

Maurice Sykes: Building Leadership, Equity & Social Justice in Early Learning

53

Appendix E: Summative Evaluation

Every participant will be given a feedback google form on PD satisfaction,

knowledge gains, and implementation progress. Google form will be placed on a QR

code and placed at the end of the PD Slides on each professional development day. The

feedback google form will include a questionnaire and open-ended questions. Below is a

sample of the questionnaire and open -ended questions.

| Question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The material was relevant to my work and I will implement resources or strategies described. | | | | | |
| Presenters was responsive to the participants and gave opportunities for reflection. | | | | | |
| The presenters were knowledgeable about the topic and the session was well planned. | | | | | |
| The presentation was engaging and met my individual needs. | | | | | |
| The material was relevant to my work and I will implement resources or strategies described. | | | | | |
| The presenters were responsive to the participants and gave opportunities for reflection. | | | | | |
| Whole group Discussion/ Activity | | | | | |
| Small Group Discussion/Activity | | | | | |
| Presentations videos | | | | | |
| Hands on activities | | | | | |
| The Length of the PD day | | | | | |
| I would recommend this session to a friend or a colleague. | | | | | |

Answer the following questions:

1.  Describe how the professional development training can be improved to
support future attendees better.

_____
_____
_____

2. Describe what could have been added that can help future attendees.

_____
_____
_____

3. Is there anything else you would like to add about your professional development
training?

_____
_____