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Teachers' Use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with Social Studies Instruction

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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Walden University
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Abstract

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by

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DPC, Andersonville Theological Seminary, 2009

EdS, Central Michigan University, 2007

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Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The problem at a rural Title I elementary school in a southern state is that it is unknown how teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) with social studies. A qualitative descriptive case study was conducted to explore teachers' perceptions of integrating PBIS within social studies classes to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The conceptual framework that grounded the study was the PBIS structure, an evidence based intervention practice and organizational system, used to support and improve behavioral and academic outcomes for students. The research questions concerned how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Twelve K-5 elementary school teachers, who had received PBIS training for 2 semesters, volunteered to participate, and submitted 5 social studies lesson plans. Data were thematically analyzed using a priori, open, and axial coding strategies. Four themes emerged: Peer Mediated Instruction, Teacher Student Relationships, Positive Reinforcement, and Optimize Student Learning. Based on the findings, a white paper was developed to present findings and recommendations on how to address planning PBIS integration with social studies instruction. Teachers may benefit from positive social change resulting from implementation of the action plan to address student learning needs and improve student engagement. Students may benefit from the positive social change, resulting from improved learning in that they may become better prepared for higher education and future careers.

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Dedication

I lovingly dedicate this research to all of my grandchildren, born and forthcoming. I challenge each of you not to permit anything to stop you from accomplishing your highest goals. I hope that I served as model of what it takes to endure, endeavor, and live with expectation. I trust all of you will use your God given abilities to be the best that you can be. Make “MiMi” proud!

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Traditionally, classroom management has been viewed as separate from classroom instruction; however every component of the classroom should be considered as instruction (Skiba, Ormiston, Martinez, & Cummings, 2016). According to Martella and Marchand-Martella (2015), classroom management consists of curriculum, instructional delivery, and behavior management. During instructional delivery, behavior management issues may occur, that have to be addressed. To address such issues, a comprehensive approach, that has been found empirically effective, should be taken to deliver instruction for both behavioral and academic skills (Gable, Tonelson, Sheth, Wilson, & Park, 2012; Skiba et al., 2016).

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), an evidenced-based, data-driven framework, is used by teachers to integrate prosocial strategies with effective instruction (Office of Special Education Programs [OSEP] Technical Assistance Center, 2019). Research findings on PBIS have been used to show outcomes of reductions in incidences of disruptive student behaviors and improvements in academic scores (National Education Association, 2014; OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2018). Results of PBIS implementation have shown increased use of academic instructional time and student engagement because teachers spend less time addressing disruptive behaviors of students (Hearden, 2013). PBIS is implemented currently in more than 24,500 schools in the United States (Georgia Department of Education, 2017a). A rural Title I elementary school in a southern state was the first elementary school in its district to

implement PBIS. Expected outcomes of this implementation, according to the school principal, included reductions in disruptive behaviors of students and reduced loss of instructional time. This section includes the local problem, definition of terms, the significance of the study, research questions, review of the literature, implications, and summary as related to a problem identified with PBIS implementation at the indicated school.

The Local Problem

The problem at the Title I elementary school was lack of knowledge concerning how teachers integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. PBIS was implemented at the school during the winter semester of the 2016-2017 school year to reduce the incidences of disruptive behavior and loss (misuse) of instructional time. Before PBIS implementation, disruptive behaviors of students prevented teachers from meeting state and district requirements for the use of instructional time, based on pacing guides and curriculum maps. During the 2014-2015 school year, students' disruptive behaviors resulted in 8,060 minutes (134 hours) loss of instructional time. This loss was significant, representing 16.58% of the state requirement of 48,600 minutes of instruction per school term (Georgia Department of Education, 2012). Overall, the loss of instructional time has negatively affected students learning opportunities and preparing for assessments (personal communication, June 24, 2017). Lack of information on how teachers integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning, has interfered with determining how teachers used the allotted instructional time.

Because of the loss of instructional time, the local school district mandated implementation of PBIS at the school as a strategy to increase the effective use of instructional time and student engagement. In preparing for the implementation of PBIS, a PBIS team of five staff members was formed at the school. The PBIS team was trained on PBIS implementation methods by a state department PBIS facilitator, one day a week during the 12 weeks of the spring semester in 2016. Teachers at the school were trained by the PBIS team during the summer break and fall semester of 2016, before implementation. However, after implementation, how trained teachers choose to integrate methods of PBIS with social studies was unknown. This problem has contributed to a gap in practice.

The strategic plan of the local school district is to provide academic excellence to all students through high-quality instruction. According to the local school district's director of instruction (DOI), teachers' use of instructional strategies needs to be explored to determine if the delivery of content connects with addressing the behavioral and learning needs of students. The DOI further commented that when teachers focus more on presenting content than on addressing behavioral and learning needs of students, instructional time is not used effectively. These comments are significant to mandating PBIS implementation at the local school to help achieve the strategic plan of the district to provide academic excellence to all students through high-quality instruction. However, after PBIS implementation, research data are needed to assess how teachers use instructional time at this school. Data on how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies

to facilitate instruction and student engagement in learning can be used to explore the use of instructional time.

Rationale

The problem of not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with academic instruction is not limited to the indicated school; it is recognized as a problem by U.S. public school practitioners and has been examined by researchers. Practitioners are challenged with knowing how to implement initiatives (such as PBIS), and researchers question how such initiatives are implemented (Godwin, Almeda, Petroccia, Baker, & Fisher, 2013; Peterson & Kaplan, 2013). Limited research is available on how teachers integrate PBIS with academic instruction (Olswang & Prelock, 2015; Scheuermann et al., 2013; Soeder-Kolodey, 2015). The integration of academic models with behavior models has produced higher outcome gains than each model used independently (McIntosh, Chard, Boland, & Horner, 2006; Stewart, Benner, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2007). However, teachers are left with the responsibility of deciding how to integrate PBIS with academic instruction. This problem has contributed to a gap in practice (Crooke & Olswang, 2015; Wubbels, 2011) between what PBIS should provide in a school and the experiences of elementary school teachers.

PBIS implementation was mandated by the study school district as a school improvement effort to increase the effective use of instructional time by increasing positive student behavior. The school principal considers this a problem because he does not know how the goals of PBIS implementation (i.e., to reduce the loss of instructional

time and disruptive student behavior) are being met. Specifically, the principal does not know:

1. how teachers integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction;
2. if teachers understand how to integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction;
3. what kind of additional support may be needed by teachers to integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction;
4. how teachers integrate PBIS with academics to engage students in the learning process;
5. if teachers understand how to integrate PBIS with academics to engage students in learning; and
6. what kind of support may be needed by teachers to integrate PBIS with instruction to engage students in learning.

The principal needs these data to determine if teachers know how to effectively implement PBIS to promote the delivery of academic instruction and positive student behavior.

The purpose of this research was to explore how teachers integrate PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. By exploring how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies at the study school, data revealed specific instructional approaches that teachers used to integrate PBIS with social studies. Data also revealed how teachers used instructional time to engage students in learning at the study school. This study provides data that can be used to fill the gap in practice.

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

The implementation of PBIS is a school improvement plan at the study school. During the 2014-2015 school year, before the current principal's administration (which began in 2015-2016), 403 incidents of office discipline referrals (ODRs) were reported for this school of 424 students. The report of ODRs contains relevant data on behavioral issues, which are often associated with student achievement challenges (Molloy, Moore, Trail, Epps, & Hopfer, 2013). ODRs can be used to determine which behaviors should be targeted with prevention efforts (Molloy et al., 2013). The ODRs consisted of 171 incidents of inappropriate school behavior, 66 incidents of disobedience/disrespect, and 40 incidents of fighting.

In dealing with the indicated disruptive behaviors, teachers at this school had an average loss of instructional time of 20 minutes per incident (Georgia Department of Education, 2015a). The school improvement goals of the study school are to reduce instructional time loss by increasing the effective use of instructional time and increase student engagement by reducing disruptive behaviors of students. The disruptive behavior of students was considered to be the primary cause of loss of instructional time. The 403 incidents were reported for this school on the Georgia Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (GaPBIS) Data Profile for the 2014-15 school year. Findings from the GaPBIS Data Profile report, student discipline data, Georgia Parent School Climate Survey, Georgia Student Health Survey 2.0, Georgia School Personnel Survey, and attendance records of students, staff members, and administrators were used to calculate a School Climate Star Rating for the elementary school (Georgia Department of Education,

2015b). The elementary school received a School Climate Star Rating of 2 out of 5, signifying below satisfactory. Because of the low rating, the school received a mandate from the local school district to begin the PBIS implementation process during the 2016-2017 school year. Exploring how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning may provide data also to assess the quality of instructional time use (i.e., efficient use or misuse) at the study school.

Evidence of the Problem From the Literature

Not knowing how PBIS is integrated with academic instruction is a noted problem in educational literature (Cooper, 2011; Etheridge, 2010; Godwin et al., 2013). Research studies have been conducted throughout the United States on instruction aimed at improving the use of instructional time, student behavior, and student achievement. Such studies have been conducted in public schools on misuse or loss of instructional time, yet limited research is available on how teachers use instruction, specifically at Title I schools (Muscott, Mann, & LeBrun, 2008). Despite interest in the effects of research based instruction on student academics, I found few studies on teachers' use of such instruction at Title I schools. Scholars have supported the need for studies on the effectiveness of instruction in meeting academic needs of students (Cook & Odom, 2013; Hayes & Gershenson, 2015; Webster-Stratton, Reinke, Herman, & Newcomer, 2011). However, the use of instruction needs to be understood to engage students in learning effectively.

The quality of academic instruction has been explored empirically, yet the focus of these efforts has been on the effects of disruptive student behavior on instructional

time (Ford, 2013; Masci, 2008); the impact of instruction on student performance (Engelland-Schultz, 2015); and the promotion of prosocial behavior (Hopson, Schiller, & Lawson, 2014; Kramer, Watson, & Hodges, 2013; La Salle, Zabek, & Meyers, 2016). Research indicates that these factors contribute either to the efficient use of instructional time or to the loss (misuse) of instructional time (Godwin et al., 2013; Hayes & Gershenson, 2015, 2016; Ratcliff et al., 2014; Rogers, Mirra, Seltzer, & Jun, 2014); however, findings do not indicate how teachers used instruction.

Definition of Terms

Academic learning time: The time that students are engaged with academic material, in which real learning is occurring (Rogers et al., 2014, p. 4)

Allocated time: the time scheduled during the school day and year for teacher instruction and student learning (McLeod, Fisher, & Hoover, 2018, p. 1)

Engaged time: A measure of the time that students are involved or appear to be involved in academic endeavors, regardless of whether real learning is occurring (Regional Education & Outreach Center for Research, 2015, p. 4)

Instructional strategies: Approaches that drive a teacher's instruction and are used to meet learning objectives, present content, and engage students in the learning process (Cook & Odom, 2013)

Instructional time: All portions of the school day when instruction or instruction-related activities based on state-approved courses are provided or coordinated by a certified teacher or substitute teacher, according to State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.02 (Georgia Department of Education, 2012, p. 1)

Loss of instructional time: The amount of time designated for instructional activities that, for several different reasons, is not used towards the completion of those activities; the misuse of instructional time (Priester, 2015). Loss of instructional time may also be defined as misuse of instructional time (Regional Education & Outreach Center for Research, 2015).

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because findings revealed how teachers at the study school integrated PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. As indicated in the problem statement, PBIS implementation was mandated by the study school district as a school improvement effort, but it was not known how the goals for PBIS implementation, to reduce the loss of instructional time and disruptive student behaviors, were being met. This information was needed to determine if teachers understood how to effectively implement PBIS to promote the delivery of academic instruction and positive student behavior.

I provided findings from the analysis of interview responses of teachers on how they integrated PBIS with instruction. These findings are significant because they were used to inform the principal about the perceptions of teachers on how they integrate PBIS with social studies instruction. This information is vital in that it can be used to determine what is needed by teachers to utilize instructional time more efficiently. Findings revealed that teachers needed support to plan the integration of PBIS with social studies instruction, engage students in learning, and guide PBIS training and professional development plans at the study school. Additionally, the findings provided data that

enhanced teachers' awareness of issues that contributed to the misuse or loss of instructional time. Findings from this study may impact social change by informing school improvement efforts at the study school. As a result, students at this school may become productive and proficient citizens.

Research Questions

The problem at a Title I elementary school was that the principal did not know how teachers integrate PBIS with academics. The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers integrated PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The following research questions were used to guide this study:

RQ1: How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with social studies to facilitate instruction?

RQ2: How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning?

Review of Literature

I conducted a review of current literature on instructional strategies and interventions used by teachers to support positive student behavior, reduce disruptive student behavior, facilitate instruction, and engage students in learning. The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers integrate PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The review of literature is arranged into two major sections. The first section consists of an explanation of the conceptual framework chosen for this research study. The second section, a review of the broader problem, consists of critical reviews of research on factors of instruction. The review of the

broader problem is divided into the following subtopics: instructional strategies, use of instructional methods, loss of instructional time, instructional effectiveness in PBIS, and use of effective instruction.

Various methods were used in the review of literature to research components relevant to addressing the problem identified in this study. I conducted a broad search, using the electronic archives of the Walden University Library. I searched for related primary and peer-reviewed research conducted within the last 5 years. I used the following databases: Academic Search Complete, Thoreau, EBSCOhost, and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). Additionally, searches were conducted on Internet databases (i.e., Google Scholar). Search terms used for this literature review consisted of *use of instructional methods, loss of instructional time, behavioral instructional strategies, impact of instructional time, use of instructional time, PBIS instructional methods, effective instruction, engaging students in learning, integrating PBIS with instruction, and barriers to integrating PBIS with instruction.*

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that grounded this study was the PBIS framework, developed by George Sugai and Robert Horner (2006). The PBIS framework is an integrated approach to improving academic achievement by providing guidance for student behavior, decision making, and social competence (Sugai & Horner, 2006). The PBIS framework involves the use of evidence-based intervention practices and organizational systems to accomplish positive academic and social outcomes for students (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). The PBIS framework entails a system of three-tiers, referred

to as primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Across the tiers, the intensity of interventions varies. According to the OSEP Technical Assistance Center (2019) the levels are described as follows:

- The primary tier (universal) is used to focus on preventing new cases of problem behavior through the implementation of quality learning for all students in all classroom and non-classroom settings (i.e., school-wide);
- The secondary tier (targeted) is used to focus on reducing prevalent problem behaviors that are not responsive to interventions on the primary level "by providing more focused, intensive, and frequent small group-oriented responses";
- The tertiary tier (intensive) is used to focus on reducing the intensity of prevalent problem behaviors that are resistant to prevention efforts, addressed on primary and secondary levels, by providing individualized responses.

Interventions in Tier 1 are designed to meet the school-wide academic and behavioral needs of students. Interventions in Tier 2 are designed to meet the mild academic and behavioral needs of students. Interventions in Tier 3 are designed to meet the severe academic and behavioral needs of students. Information from academic and behavioral sources are used to determine supplemental supports needed by students (Lane, Oakes, Ennis, & Hirsch, 2014).

When integrated with effective academic instruction, PBIS is used to provide a wide range of opportunities for students to be academically successful, as focus is placed on their social, emotional, and behavioral needs (Chaparro, Nese, & McIntosh, 2015;

Scheuermann et al., 2013). According to Sugai and Simonsen (2012), PBIS is a "framework for enhancing the adoption and implementation of a continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve academically and behaviorally important outcomes for all students" (p. 2). The PBIS framework consists of instructional methods to help maximize student learning (Chaparro et al., 2015), increase student academic engagement, and improve outcomes (Algozzine & Algozzine, 2007; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006). Such methods consist of using explicit instruction, building students' background knowledge, allowing students more response opportunities, and providing performance feedback to students (Chaparro et al., 2015).

Operant conditioning is fundamental to the design and implementation of PBIS. Operant conditioning involves the integration of both instructional theory and classroom management, which are equally important to efforts to affect student learning positively. Burrhus Frederick Skinner established behaviorism as the basic principle of operant conditioning (Lefrancois, 2006). Skinner (1948) derived that operant behavior is strengthened by consequences, referred to as *positive reinforcers*, and weakened by consequences, referred to as *negative reinforcers* or *punishers*. Skinner focused on the application of operant conditioning as an effective method for managing problem behaviors.

Operant conditioning was derived from instructional theory, developed by Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl (1965). Instructional theory entails structuring learning materials for specifically instructing youth (Reigeluth, 2012). Instructional theory has been used to identify methods for supporting and facilitating learning and is

influenced by three fundamental theories—behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism (Perkins, 2002). Since the 1990s, interest has increased for integrating academic and behavioral supports into a single system to address the learning and behavioral needs of students (Stewart et al., 2007). According to Bohanon, Goodman, and McIntosh (2010), when problem behaviors are reduced, instruction can occur with fewer distractions. As the stated problem for the study involved how teachers integrate PBIS with instruction in social studies, instructional methods of the PBIS framework were used to frame interview questions. The instructional methods of the PBIS framework were the lens through which teachers' interview responses about how they integrate PBIS with instruction were viewed.

Review of the Broader Problem

The broader problem involved identifying instructional strategies that are effective in maximizing the use of instructional time. Identifying effective instructional strategies is challenging for educators, yet when successfully identified and used by teachers, such strategies enable students to meet learning objectives and prepare for assessments (Garland, 2017). However, determining the use of instructional strategies is recognized as a significant challenge in U.S. public schools, by both researchers and practitioners (Ficarra & Quinn, 2014; Hayes & Gershenson, 2015), specifically in high-poverty schools (Hayes & Gershenson, 2016). Research studies conducted by the previously mentioned researchers and practitioners (and more) are critiqued in the following subsections.

Use of Instructional Methods. Instructional methods are used to drive instruction (or to present content) to meet learning objectives and engage students in the process of learning (Honebein, & Honebein, 2015). Teachers must understand how to plan the use of instructional methods to effectively reinforce student learning (Elliott et al., 2017). According to Cook and Odom (2013), when investigating the use of instructional methods, two factors should be considered: First, no evidence-based practice works for every student; and secondly, not enough quality research, identifying and examining effective research-based instructional methods is available. These factors should be addressed because instructional methods are used to connect standards to student learning (Fonger et al., 2018). Since the late 1980s, researchers have continued to ask questions about the use of instructional methods (Wagner et al., 2016). Almost 40 years later, data about how teachers use instructional methods are still being sought by researchers.

An investigation of 22 classes (Grades K-4th) of charter schools was conducted by Godwin et al. (2013) to explore a relationship between features of instructional methods (small group work vs. whole group instruction at desk) and off-task behavior in elementary students. The researchers observed less off-task behavior when teachers used instructional formats (small group) that appeared to be easier to supervise, resulting in more efficient use of instructional time. Though findings supported the effectiveness of small group instruction in reducing off-task behavior, the researchers in this study could have considered another factor to explore results. They also could have considered investigating whether the same instructional methods were used in each group and how

the methods were used. This information could help in determining the effect of the use of instructional methods on group size (small vs. whole group instruction).

A qualitative study was conducted by Morris, Cartledge, Green, Barber, and Gardner (2016) to gain insight into teachers' perceptions about using newly implemented research-based instructional methods to address urban students' reading needs. However, the researchers focused primarily on teachers' sense of effectiveness of instruction, rather than their perceptions of how the instructional methods were used. Findings indicated teachers' acknowledgment of confusion about how to use the required methods. Reasons given for their hesitancy in using the instructional method were limited training, need for professional development, and lack of confidence. According to Fisher, Frey, and Pumpian (2012), for instructional strategies to be effective, teachers must be confident in their instructional skills. However, to understand if teachers are confident in their instructional skills, an investigation of their use of instructional methods is needed.

The proper use of instructional methods is vital in effectively teaching and guiding students in the learning process (Eristi & Akdeniz, 2012). However, unless effective instructional strategies are identified, proficiency standards may decrease (Halladay & Moses, 2013; Peterson & Kaplan, 2013). Research has been conducted throughout the United States on the use of instructional methods that have been aimed at improving the use of instructional time and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2015). Even though findings indicate that effective use of instructional methods maximize teachers' ability to engage students and enhance their achievement (Weimer, 2008), teachers are hindered in aligning instruction with learning objectives, which

interferes with student learning (Knight, 2011; Southern Regional Educational Board, 2017).

Alignment ensures that learning objectives, assessments of those learning objectives, and instructional methods are connected, so that accurate assessments of what students learn can occur (Faculty Center for Teaching & Learning, 2017). However, addressing the use of instructional methods is necessary for determining instructional factors needed for effecting positive student engagement and learning (Rivkin & Schiman, 2015). Until educators determine effective use of instructional methods, effective instructional strategies cannot be identified.

Loss of Instructional Time. Hayes and Gershenson (2015) verified the challenge of identifying a causal relationship between additional instructional days and student achievement. The researchers analyzed data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal-Kindergarten Cohort on 16,050 kindergarten students. The findings indicated a significant effect of additional instructional days as being more beneficial to higher achievers. However, the researchers concluded that schools with better performing students might also have more effective teachers, yet the use of instructional time was not considered in this study. As a result, there is a need to assess the use and loss of instructional time to investigate the impact of instruction on student learning.

Nationally, the loss of nearly 18 million days of instruction for approximately 3.5 million students (in elementary and secondary schools), was reported during the 2011-2012 school year (Losen, Hodson, Keith, Morrison, & Belway, 2015). This loss of instructional time is a significant factor in education, yet its causes are still questioned.

Teachers have noted disruptive student behaviors as barriers to teaching and learning contributing to the loss of instructional time (Georgia Department of Education, 2014). Research indicates possible factors that may contribute to the loss of instructional time, among which are the following:

- disruptive student behavior (Martens & Andreen, 2013; Ratcliff et al., 2014);
- quality of curriculum (Battey, Neal, Leyva, & Adams-Wiggins, 2016);
- ineffective instruction (Meador, 2017);
- excessive time spent dealing with negative behaviors (Georgia Department of Education, 2017b; Priester, 2015);
- poor classroom management (Goodman-Scott, 2013; Meador, 2017); and
- insufficient professional development in planning instruction and classroom management (McNeill, Katsh-Singer, Gonzalez-Howard, & Loper, 2016; Ratcliff et al., 2014; Tebukooza, 2015).

Researchers have noted that disruptive student behaviors negatively affect instruction and learning by requiring more of the teacher's time and attention, which reduces the time used for instruction (Martens & Andreen, 2013). According to Goodman-Scott (2013), teachers not consistently implementing positive classroom practices and engaging instruction inadvertently foster distractions from student learning, resulting in loss of instructional time. The loss of instructional time, also viewed as misuse of instructional time (Regional Education & Outreach Center for Research, 2015), presents a challenge for teachers to align instructional methods with learning objectives and assessments (Regional Education & Outreach Center for Research, 2015; Southern

Regional Educational Board, 2017). However, the loss of instructional time can be avoided with procedures and expectations that maximize learning opportunities to engage student learning (Meador, 2017). Lesson planning and organization, before instruction, are vital to the successful management of instructional time (Tebukooza, 2015).

In a 4-year qualitative study, Ratcliff et al. (2014) observed 91 classrooms and found a significant difference in end-of-course scores, due to teachers' retreating (resulting in loss in instructional time), rather than classroom dynamics. *Retreating* (for this research) was defined as teachers giving up when students refuse to comply (Ratcliff et al., 2014). Findings from this study support the importance of evaluating instructional time by observing how teachers use instructional methods and classroom management to impact student performance. This study illustrated how the use of instructional methods could be investigated to explore teachers' instructional and classroom management needs. However, limited research has been conducted to determine how instructional methods are used to avoid the loss of instructional time (Olswang & Prelock, 2015; Scheuermann et al., 2013; Soeder-Kolodey, 2015). Investigation of instructional methods will help teachers understand how to engage students and reduce the loss of instructional time (Rivkin & Schiman, 2015). According to Kwon (2016), identifying barriers to the use of instructional methods can help to determine teachers' instructional needs.

Behavioral Intervention Strategies. In a quantitative study, Ford (2013) reviewed research on Wisconsin public school students to explore links between disruptive student behavior and academic achievement. He found that a reduction in disruptive behavior yielded substantial achievement gains for students by one-half

percentage point in reading and five percentage points in math. Findings indicated improvements in achievement scores, student behavior, and student classroom involvement, as well as an increase in the successful use of instructional time. In this study, prosocial strategies were implemented with instruction, yet findings did not indicate which instructional methods were used to substantiate achievement gains. The study's focus was placed on the impact of disruptive behavior on student achievement, rather than the use of instructional methods on student achievement. An investigation of the use of instructional methods with behavior management is necessary for determining the effectiveness of instructional methods in promoting student achievement.

According to Reinke, Herman, and Stormont (2013), children with behavioral challenges often experience learning challenges. Off-task behavior is considered a significant issue in the classroom because it impedes instruction and student learning (Godwin et al., 2013; Reinke et al., 2013). Disruptive behaviors cause disruptions in the academic engagement of students, which interferes with their mastering learning skills (Martella & Marchand-Martella, 2015). However, students have better grades and behavior in school environments promoting pro-social behavior (Hopson, Schiller, & Lawson, 2014).

In a quantitative study conducted by Ficarra and Quinn (2014), public school teachers (grades K-12), in New York State, were surveyed on their knowledge and use of PBIS strategies with instruction. Findings indicated teachers at schools implementing PBIS had higher ratings in teaching, reviewing, monitoring, posting, and reinforcing expectations. However, bias or inaccurate recall, overestimates of confidence and

preparedness, as well as limited response rates may be due to self-reported data. The researchers recommended qualitative methods for conducting future studies on this topic. The researchers sought to find a correlation between teacher knowledge and competency ratings in their use of PBIS strategies.

Brown, Corrigan, and Higgens-D'Alessandro (2012) supported the importance of looking at student achievement through multiple dimensions (i.e., school climate, character education, cooperative learning, moral development, service learning, role modeling, social and emotional learning, inspired teaching, etc.), rather than just through standardized test scores. The researchers contended that prosocial education should be accepted as "equally important as academic education" (p. 6). Cohen (2014) indicated that schools working intentionally to teach students to be more ethically minded increased academic achievement and decreased incidences of school violence. This increase was noted from three to five years after implementing prosocial education. Cohen (2014) affirmed that school reform should include educational goals to promote pro-social education and purported that children should be taught skills that engage citizenship in schools, homes, and neighborhoods.

Academic performance and student discipline will not improve if the school environment is not positive (Kramer et al., 2013). According to Cornell, Shukla, and Konold (2016), there is a positive association of disciplinary structure with student academic achievement. Research indicates the decrease of disruptive behavior and interrupted instructional time, results in increased academic achievement for all students (Dougherty & Sharkey, 2017). Factors such as school environment, disciplinary

structure, and use of instructional time should be considered when investigating components of academic influencers.

The U.S. Department of Education (2014) determined three key principles as vital for creating productive learning environments. The principles are: be proactive—develop positive and respectful school climates; be fair—make clear and appropriate expectations and consequences; and be scientifically based—use data to guarantee fairness and equity for all students. The principles indicate the significance of engaging prosocial strategies to ensure an environment for instructional success for teachers and learning success for students.

Impact of Instructional Time (Quality vs. Quantity). The impact of instruction can be assessed by focusing on quality of instructional time, as well as the quantity of instruction time. Not until recently, has the quality, or use, of instructional time been explored empirically (Jenkins, 2016). Researchers have determined that student performance, learning opportunities, and learning outcomes are impacted by the quality of instruction (Godwin et al., 2013). Researchers also indicate the most powerful variable that determines student's academic success is the quality of instructional time (Battey, Neal, Leyva, & Adams-Wiggins, 2016; Steinberg & Sartain, 2015; Tebukooza, 2015). Studies measuring the quality of instructional time assess the effectiveness of the use of time allocated for instruction. However, studies measuring the quantity of instructional time also determined the effectiveness of the amount of time used for instruction.

Researchers support additional instructional time (i.e., quantity) as being significant in raising student achievement; however, the causal link between the two variables is dependent upon the classroom environment, the quality of instruction, and the rate of student comprehension (Rivkin & Schiman, 2015). Hayes and Gershenson (2016) investigated the impact of the quantity of instructional time on student achievement gains. Findings revealed high achieving students benefitted more from increased instructional time than low achieving students. Other studies recommend assessments of the quality of instructional strategies to determine how specific teacher and student needs are being met (Bateman & Tucker, 2009; Schmidt-Jones, 2012).

In addition to looking at the quality or quantity of instructional time, lesson planning is vital to determining the impact of instructional time. According to Meador (2017), lesson plans should be developed with purpose, by understanding that every minute of the school day is valuable. "Quantity doesn't always contribute to quality" (Jenkins, 2016, p. 131), yet quality use of instruction is essential for effective utilization of instructional time (Ficarra & Quinn, 2014; Tebukooza, 2015). However, how instruction is used determines student successes or failures (Martella & Marchand-Martella, 2015). Variables such as programs and interventions, used for instructing students, need to be examined to evaluate the use of instructional time.

PBIS Instructional Methods. Behavior management is among teachers' major concerns because of its effect on students' academic performance (Martella & Marchand-Martella, 2015). However, behavior management cannot be separated from the delivery of instruction. Teachers use PBIS methods to focus on engaging instruction to avoid

disruptions and loss of instructional time (OSEP National Technical Assistance Center, 2019). While using PBIS methods, teachers incorporate rewards, positive feedback, and, or praise, to encourage positive behavior, which has reduced disruptive behaviors and increased effective use of instructional time (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). As the PBIS is used to redirect disruptive behavior of students, effective use of instructional time is improved (Anderson-Saunders, 2016). It has been determined that reductions in disruptive student behavior result in increased instructional time use and improved academic outcomes (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019).

Norton (2009) assessed that teachers spend between 40 to 75% of instructional time on other activities. A solution given to address this issue is the use of engaging PBIS instructional methods (Chaparro et al., 2015). The aim of implementing PBIS is to support the learning environment by "building the capability of teachers to embed the teaching and monitoring of social skills into the curriculum" (Yeung et al., 2016, p. 147). PBIS is a framework used to guide the integration of evidenced-based prosocial practices with instruction for improving behavioral and academic outcomes for students (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). The developers of PBIS emphasize the integration of the discipline strategies with academic instruction, but they do not endorse the use of any specific instructional approach. However, an instructional approach should be used with the PBIS framework to "assist students in acquiring behaviors that facilitate teaching and the learning process" (Lane, Menzies, Ennis, & Bezdek, 2013, p. 10). According to researchers (Anderson-Saunders, 2016; Chaparro et al., 2015; Lane et al., 2013; McIntosh, Chard, & Boland, 2006), when teachers integrate PBIS with effective

instruction, students will be provided with a wide range of opportunities to be academically successful as focus is placed on their social, emotional, and behavioral needs.

The PBIS structure entails a 3-5 year process period for developing social culture in schools, used to support students' behavioral and academic needs (Horner, Sugai, & Lewis, 2015). PBIS is a data-driven framework that utilizes evidence-based intervention practices and organizational systems to support and improve behavioral and academic outcomes for all students (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). The PBIS framework is an approach or process implemented to produce a school environment that supports social and academic success for all students (Graham, Hubbuch, & Jenkins, 2016). The PBIS approach consists of integrating four elements: data, practice, systems, and outcomes to guide implementation. According to Sugai and Simonsen (2012), data are used to inform and guide the process of decision making, as well as monitor the impact of practices (evidenced-based interventions) and outcomes. Systems (school districts) provide components vital for effective PBIS implementation, such as staff support, professional development, and funding.

The PBIS framework entails instructional methods for modeling, prompting, monitoring, and reinforcing student learning. The effectiveness of teachers' use of these methods has been determined in several studies, as indicated below:

- Modeling--teachers utilizing explicit instruction by clarifying teaching objectives and learning expectations for students (Hattie, 2012);

- Prompting--teachers optimizing learning for students by building on and priming students' background knowledge (Al-Faki & Siddiek, 2013);
- Monitoring--teachers providing students with more opportunities to respond, practice, and engage in learning, giving them more chances to reinforce learning (Haydon, Mancil, & Van Loan, 2009); and
- Reinforcing--teachers providing performance feedback, by increasing students' awareness of progress and offering more chances for students to make corrections (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Reddy, Fabiano, Dudek, & Hsu, 2013).

Effective use of these instructional methods will help teachers deliver and present learning materials, manage student behavior, and examine instructional practices so disruptive behavior will be minimized and student learning opportunities will be maximized (Horner et al., 2015). According to Cook and Odom (2013), effective strategies can be identified when teachers share successes in using specific strategies. This knowledge can be used to inform and guide the process of decision making, as well as examine the impact of practices (i.e., constructs of PBIS) and outcomes (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

Effective instruction. Classroom management consists of academics and behavior management, which could be addressed with effective instruction (Cooper & Scott, 2017). According to Martella and Marchand-Martella (2015), effective instruction decreases disruptive behavior and increases student learning. How instruction is used determines student successes or failures (Martella & Marchand-Martella, 2015).

However, the effectiveness of instruction depends on how teachers are prepared (i.e., through professional development) to use instructional processes (McNeill et al., 2016). As researchers have investigated the use of several instructional processes, findings revealed factors of how teachers use the processes as determinates of effective instruction.

Five processes of effective instruction are: engaging learners in real-life problem solving; using current knowledge as a support for new knowledge; modeling new knowledge to students; allowing students demonstrate application of new knowledge; and teaching students how to integrate the new knowledge with old knowledge (Khalil & Elkhider, 2016). Similar to these processes are three evidenced-based practices used by teachers to maximize student engagement. The practices consist of teachers: modeling academic and social behavior; offering students opportunities to be engaged (respond) during academic instruction time; and providing students with academic and behavioral feedback (Harbour, Evanovich, Sweigart, & Hughes, 2015). The five principles and three practices, however, not specific to any instructional strategy, entail teachers providing students with increased opportunities to be academically and socially successful.

Effective instruction encompasses complex processes. According to Moore (2015), "Effective instruction begins with efficient classroom organization and time management" (p.12). Efficient classroom organization and time management means students know what to do with class time (Moore, 2015). To have effective instruction, teachers have to engage students in meaningful learning tasks. This method is also

referred to as active instruction, where students are actively engaged in processes of learning (Hirn, Hollo, & Scott, 2018). However, methods to actively engage students in learning, need to be determined, to verify components of active instruction.

Engaging students in learning. Student engagement is defined as "the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education" (Great Schools Partnership, 2016, p. 1). Teachers play a major role in student engagement through lesson development, instructional presentations, and providing a positive learning environment (Allen et al., 2013). Researchers support the notion that proper planning and appropriate use of instructional methods are vital to effectively teaching and guiding students in the learning process (Kiemer, Gröschner, Kunter, & Seide, 2018). The time students are involved or appear to be involved in academic endeavors, "regardless of whether real learning occurs," is referred to as engaged time (Regional Education & Outreach Center for Research, 2015, p. 4). In contrast, academic learning time is "the time students are engaged meaningfully and successfully with academic material where real learning is occurring" (Rogers, et al., 2014, p. 4). Overall, when instructional time is utilized effectively, student engagement and learning will be improved.

Researchers purport that to engage students academically, strategies to engage them emotionally must also be identified (Ulmanen, Soini, Pietarienen, & Pyhalto, 2016). According to Ulmanen et al. (2016), this process would require teachers to modify instruction by permitting interactions among peers to direct students' attention to learning

activities. The process of active learning would support student learning by providing an environment that would encourage student engagement. However, teachers must understand how to use active learning instructional strategies to effectively engage students in active learning (Elliott, Combs, Huelskamp, & Hritz, 2017).

Active learning instructional strategies (ALIS), such as PBIS, can be easily integrated into instructional practices and activities in any content area (Lane, Menzies, Ennis, & Oakes, 2015). Active learning instruction involves teachers engaging students by utilizing higher-order learning tasks (i.e., synthesis, analysis, etc.). These strategies cause students to think about what they are doing, as they are going through the learning process (Elliott et al., 2017). ALIS consist of students: expressing ideas through writing; sharing ideas with a partner; receiving and giving feedback, and; using reflection to review and reinforce what is being learned (Ennis, Lane, & Oakes, 2018).

ALIS is a process for deep learning, which permits students to relate ideas with each other. Effective use of ALIS has been associated with students' sense of belonging, which encourages engagement (Dupont, Galand, Nils, & Hospel, 2014). When using ALIS, teachers spend more time helping students to understand and develop skills (promoting deeper learning) and less time transmitting information (i.e., promoting basic learning). The effective use of ALIS results in students being provided opportunities to apply learning, as well as receive and give immediate feedback.

Integrating PBIS with academic instruction. Teachers understanding how to integrate PBIS with academic instruction, is vital to using instruction effectively and reducing the loss of instructional time. PBIS is implemented to promote social culture in

schools by supporting behavioral and academic needs of students by decreasing disruptions and increasing the use of instructional time (Horner et al., 2015, p.1). However, researchers support that the integration of instructional systems with behavior management can be more effectively managed by teachers, than addressing the processes separately (Lane, et al., 2013; Martella & Marchand-Martella, 2015). **S**chools must use behavioral and academic data to develop integration plans to effectively address such student needs (Bohanon, Goodman, & McIntosh, 2010). Such data may be used to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the current instructional system and determine the needs for effective integration of PBIS with instruction (Bohanon et al.). According to the OSEP Technical Assistance Center (2019), when preventive school discipline and class management are integrated with effective instruction, student success may be maximized.

Researchers support the integration of instructional systems with behavior management as the most effective method for meeting all of the listed student needs. However, understanding how to use PBIS instructional methods is fundamental for determining how to integrate them with academic instruction. The integration of PBIS with academics involves teachers strategically merging instruction and content from both domains (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). This approach differs from teaching each of these domains independently and requires the use of more instructional time, which is already a challenge for teachers.

Integrating PBIS with academic instruction permits teachers to support the academic and behavioral competence of students (OSEP Technical Assistance Center,

2019). This strategy allows teachers to provide more efficient and effective instruction. The advantages of integrating PBIS with instruction consist of the following benefits: students engaging less in problem behavior, academic engagement time is increased, and elements of quality instruction are shared between both academic and behavioral practices (McIntosh & Goodman, 2016). Effective integration of academic and behavioral supports includes emotional, social, and behavioral content within academic instruction being addressed; and differentiated instruction matched to students' academic, emotional, social, and behavioral needs (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). When PBIS is effectively integrated with academics, the needs of all students can be addressed.

Barriers to integrating PBIS with academic instruction. Researchers have indicated that 85 percent of problems with integrating PBIS with academic instruction involves the implementation process and the environment, rather than just student issues (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015). Hannigan and Hauser support schools investigating the instructional system, implementation process, and environment when making plans for implementing PBIS. The researchers created the PBIS Champion Model System to help educators develop, support, and sustain high-quality implementation of PBIS. They identified components critical for effective PBIS implementation; however, they did not specify how to integrate PBIS with instruction, which is a barrier to integrating PBIS.

Researchers have identified predictable barriers to integrating PBIS (Swain-Bradway, Swoszowski, Boden, & Sprague, 2013; Tyre & Feuerborn, 2016). Swain-Bradway et al. (2013) identified four barriers to integrating PBIS. The four barriers

consist of: lack of buy-in; use of punishment in responding to inappropriate behavior; professional development needs of school system; and characteristics of youth. Specific to these barriers was staff members' lack of engagement in daily PBIS practices. Martin (2013) also determined the lack of buy-in as a barrier to integrating PBIS. He noted that teachers who did not support the implementation of PBIS did not follow the steps of positive behavioral reinforcement consistently. However, the researchers did not consider if the educator's lack of support resulted from not understanding how to integrate PBIS with academic instruction. Tyre & Feuerborn (2016) referred to this barrier as low staff support. The researchers attributed this issue to not understanding the structure of PBIS, disagreement with the philosophical values of PBIS; and negative school climate.

Implications

Shared findings of this study may provide data to district leaders, school administrators, and instructional coaches to verify teachers' reports of how they integrate PBIS in social studies. Administrators could make data-driven decisions about the use of instruction to alleviate/reduce the loss of instructional time. Instructional coaches could use findings to determine teacher training and professional development needs for improving the use of instructional time (Hayes & Gershenson, 2015; Hayes & Gershenson, 2016). Teachers could be informed on how to integrate methods of PBIS with academic instruction to support positive student behavior and engage students in learning more effectively. Findings from this research may indicate what is required for teachers to successfully integrate PBIS with academics to effectively reduce disruptive

student behavior and increase student learning opportunities. Successful implementation of PBIS may decrease or eliminate the loss of instructional time, which would address the issue leading to the district-mandated PBIS implementation at the study school.

Findings from analysis of data collected in this research may result in a project which outlines professional development needed by teachers at the study school. This project will provide resources relative to integrating PBIS with Social Studies to effectively facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Researchers have indicated that by engaging students in the process of learning, teachers are enabled to avoid the loss of instructional time (Martel, 2009; Webster-Stratton et al., 2011). Teachers' instructional needs can be addressed through professional development, available through schools and districts. Teachers' instructional needs can also be addressed through personal learning, collaboration, and matching student needs, which may improve the quality of the use of instructional time (Shields, Ireland, City, Derderian, & Miles, 2012). Professional development is vital for teacher and school success, yet it is criticized due to limited data on teacher and school improvement needs before planning (Sheridan, Pope-Edwards, Marvin, & Knoche, 2009).

Summary

Section 1 of this study was used to describe the problem of not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Also, evidence of this problem was provided at the local level and in professional literature. In section 1, a review of the literature was presented, inclusive of a conceptual framework, relative to the stated problem. The conceptual framework was

used to validate the exploration of the problem by indicating the processes necessary for insuring effective instructional practices. Section 1 was concluded with potential implications of the study, based on findings of collected data and analysis of data. In section 2, the methodology to conduct this qualitative research study will be described. This section will be used to describe the research design, the proposed approach, how participants will be selected, and the process for data collection.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

This study was conducted to explore how teachers integrate PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. According to the building principal at the study school, teachers were trained to use the following PBIS methods to reduce the incidences of disruptive behavior and loss of instructional time: using explicit instruction, building on student background knowledge, allowing students more response opportunities, and providing performance feedback to students. In Section 2, I describe the research design used to investigate the stated problem. I collected both interview and document review qualitative data to answer the research questions:

RQ1: How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with social studies to facilitate instruction?

RQ2: How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning?

I used a qualitative research design to explore teachers' perceptions about how they integrated PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The participants were elementary school teachers (Grades K-5) who volunteered to be interviewed and submit five social studies lesson plans. Semi structured interviews were conducted using open-ended questions that were aligned to the research questions. A review of the lesson plan documents was also conducted to corroborate the findings from interviews. In this section, I clarify why I chose a qualitative case study as the appropriate design for this research study. Additionally, in

this section, the following components of the qualitative research design are addressed: how the design was determined from the study problem and research questions, justification for the choice of design and approach, explanations for why other probable choices were not appropriate; criteria used for selecting participants, descriptions of collected data, and processes of qualitative analysis.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

This research was designed to explore how teachers integrated PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. I determined that a qualitative method was the most appropriate research design because of the investigative nature of the research questions (Creswell, 2012a). According to Yin (2014), qualitative research entails exploring perspectives and contributing insights of people about their experiences. My study focus was exploring, explaining, and understanding the phenomenon by providing answers to "what" and "how" questions (Creswell, 2012a). Therefore, I concluded that the qualitative method was the best research design for this study. This design allowed me to probe deeply and explore the perceptions of participants (Creswell, 2012b; Yin, 2014) and answer the research questions. By using the qualitative method, I was able to generate rich descriptions of data from perceptions of participants and use reviews of documents to corroborate findings.

Initially, I considered whether I should use a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research design. Prior to determining the research design, I considered the following factors: types of questions being asked, type of data needed, how data would be collected and analyzed, ways to check the validity of analyses, the possible sample size

and selection process, and possible threats to confidentiality (Creswell, 2012a; Onwuegbuzie, Leach, Slate, Stark, & Sharma, 2012). After considering the various research methods, I concluded that a quantitative design was inappropriate for this study because the research focus was not to confirm a hypothesis, ask how many, provide statistical results, gather data from closed-ended questions, or collect measurable or numerical data (Creswell, 2012a). According to Yin (2014), choosing an appropriate research method is critical for the success of a study. Because the approach for my study was more subjective than objective, there was no need to consider a mixed-methods study (Center for Innovation in Research & Teaching, 2017). As my study did not necessitate the integration of both qualitative and quantitative data, I concluded that a qualitative method was the most appropriate research design.

After determining a qualitative method as the best research design for this study, I explored the appropriate qualitative approach to investigating the research problem. Qualitative research approaches consist of grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, field studies, and case studies (Creswell, 2012b; Glesne, 2011; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). Following a review of each of these approaches, I determined a case study to be the most appropriate method for addressing the stated problem and research questions. I chose a case study, considering that the primary goal was to better understand a phenomenon (Merriam, 2015). As defined by Yin (2017), "a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p. 15).

Unlike an ethnographic approach, used to observe and explore an entire social group (Schensul, Schensul, & LeCompte, 1999), a case study is used as an in-depth analysis of a single group, person, process, or activity, to describe various phenomena (Yin, 2014). Case study is used as a research approach to answer "how" and "what" questions (Creswell, 2012a) and can be used as the entire research design, if planned properly (Yin, 2014). Pine (2009) stated, "program implementation case studies help determine whether implementation is consistent with its intent" (p. 218). According to Sugai (2018), PBIS practices should be "aligned with and integrated into academic instruction, professional development, and school improvement goals, etc." (p. 5).

Because the purpose of this study was to explore how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning, I determined that a qualitative case study was the appropriate qualitative approach to take. The other listed qualitative research approaches were not appropriate for my study for various reasons. When using grounded theory, a researcher uses observations to develop and build theories about the phenomena (Birks & Mills, 2015; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Smith, Bekker, & Cheater, 2011; Urquhart, 2012). Because my study is not being conducted to determine a new theory, grounded theory was considered an inappropriate qualitative approach for investigating the research problem. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach used to explore others' subjective interpretations and experiences to understand how they view the world (Khan, 2014). However, phenomenology was not considered as an appropriate qualitative approach for this study because its focus is on

culture (Percy, Kostere, & Kostere, 2015) and describing experiences and perceptions of participants concerning specific events (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

This study was conducted to explore experiences, not culture. The ethnographic approach, which originated in anthropology, involves an outsider studying an entire culture or ethnic group. The outsider functions as a participant-observer. During the study, the outsider participates by taking descriptive notes over an extensive amount of time, exploring shared beliefs, languages, and behavior patterns (Creswell, 2012a; Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012). Field studies, also drawing from anthropology, use a broader approach to qualitative research. In a field study, the researcher goes into the field to observe another culture in its natural state to understand members' perspective on the world (Creswell, 2012a). As indicated, none of the characteristics of these approaches were appropriate for conducting this study.

After considering that the focus of this study was explanatory, I concluded that a descriptive case study was the best research approach (Yin, 2017). A descriptive case study was used to develop in-depth narratives and analysis of data (Yin, 2014). This approach permitted me to provide detailed descriptions and explanations (Merriam, 2015) of perceptions of teachers on how they integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. I conducted interviews and reviewed documents to collect data for this qualitative study. Through convenience sampling, teachers at the study school shared their perceptions of how they integrated PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. They also shared their social studies lesson plans for my review and corroboration of interview responses.

I describe processes for selection of participants and details of data tools in the following segments of this section.

Participants

Procedure for Gaining Access to Participants

After obtaining approval from the Walden Institutional Review Board (approval number 10-29-18-0134218), I completed and submitted the Application to Conduct Research: District Level form, via the district website, at the Title I elementary school in rural North Georgia. Approval to conduct the study was granted through a letter of cooperation from the district officiate, via email. After receiving the letter, I contacted the elementary school principal via telephone to discuss the details of the study. During the phone conference, I presented the purpose and processes of the study and provided my contact information. Following the phone meeting, I received teachers' school email addresses via email from the principal. The school has a total of 21 teachers, in Grades K-5: four kindergarten teachers; four first grade teachers; three second grade teachers; three third grade teachers; three fourth grade teachers; and four fifth grade teachers.

I contacted all 21 teachers via their school email addresses, inviting them to attend a 30-minute information meeting via telephone to discuss details of the study. I scheduled individual information meetings and confirmed via email after 12 teachers agreed to meet with me. The teachers provided their telephone numbers via return email messages. I then scheduled initial meetings and confirmed via email. A follow-up email was sent to the nine teachers who did not respond to the initial invitation. Three more teachers expressed interest in participating via email but did not provide telephone

contact information. I sent two additional follow-up emails to the three teachers, but did not receive response emails from them.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

The participants selected for this study consisted of teachers of Grades K-5 who were on the staff of the study school. The teachers at this school were selected as the appropriate participants because all of the teachers had been involved in PBIS training for two semesters prior to PBIS implementation at the study school. The selected teachers served as the primary sources of research data because they were able to provide valuable, first-hand information on instructional practices (Crooke & Olswang, 2015). Each teacher taught self-contained classes, meaning that every teacher taught every basic subject (language arts, social studies, math, and science). In the selection of teachers, I used an intentional approach to maximize the homogeneity of the sample and ensure that participants shared the same phenomenon they discussed in the interviews.

The study school had a total population of 21 teachers in Grades K-5: four kindergarten teachers, four first grade teachers, three second grade teachers, three third grade teachers, three fourth grade teachers, and four fifth grade teachers. The school was the first K-5 elementary school in the district to implement PBIS. The school has a low socioeconomic demographic, with 87% of students on free and reduced-priced lunches. The school had 420 students in Grades K-5 with a fairly even distribution across grade levels: 86 students in kindergarten; 64 students in Grade 1, 57 students in Grade 2, 67 students in Grade 3, 61 students in Grade 4, and 85 students in Grade 5. The racial/ethnic makeup of the student population was as follows: 12.40% Hispanic/Latino (52 students),

70.23% Black/African American (295 students), 11.20% White (47 students), and 6.17% other (26 students; data from the district website, 2018).

Justification for Number of Participants

I used convenience sampling, a nonprobability sampling method for this study. Convenience sampling depends upon participants' availability or self-selection (Creswell, 2012b) and similar attributes (Mamen & Sano, 2012). The sample consisted of teachers at the school who were actively involved in integrating PBIS with social studies instruction. I requested a list of the names of teachers at the school from the principal. The teacher population consists of 21 teachers of grade levels K-5, all of whom had been trained to implement PBIS. I contacted the teachers via their school email and invited all 21 to individual information meetings. I attempted to garner the cooperation of 12 teachers to participate in this study. Thomson (2004), recommended 10 to 15 participants for a qualitative study. However, because participants can withdraw from research studies, my goal was 15 potential participants. After 15 teachers agreed via email to attend a meeting, I scheduled individual meetings with them.

Participant Demographics

Twelve of the 21 teachers at the school participated in the study. The participants consisted of two first grade teachers, two second grade teachers, two third grade teachers, three fourth grade teachers, and three fifth grade teachers. The 12 teachers agreed to participate in this research study by completing an interview and submitting social studies lesson plans for review. I present the general demographics of the 12 teachers who participated in this study in Table 1. The teaching experience of participants ranged from

3 years (fifth grade teacher, P5) to 20 years (second grade teacher, P11). On average, participants had 10 years of experience as a classroom teacher. I did not indicate personal demographic data such as age or gender, but for ease of reference, all teachers are referred to as female.

Table 1

General Demographics of Participants

Participant's pseudonym	Grade taught	Number of years as a classroom teacher
P1	1	10
P9	1	6
P2	2	15
P11	2	20
P6	3	10
P12	3	10
P3	4	8
P7	4	11
P8	4	12
P4	5	11
P5	5	3
P10	5	5

Establishing Researcher Participant Relationship

Because I had no previous professional or personal experiences with the participants, I established a researcher participant working relationship before interviews. I conducted an initial meeting with each teacher who was interested in participating in the study at a mutually agreed upon location. During the meeting, I introduced myself, thanked the teacher for attending the meeting, shared my study interest, provided details on the study, and gave an explanation of participants' responsibilities and rights. I provided a written invitation to participate in the study, detailing the purpose, process,

timeframe, protocol for interviews and lesson plan reviews. I also sent a copy of the invitation to the principal via email. I allowed opportunities for the teachers to ask questions and clarify any doubts they had about the research study. Further, I provided my personal contact information (email and cell phone number) to teachers, should questions occur following the initial meeting.

To encourage a positive researcher-participant working relationship, I informed the teachers that interviews would be audio-recorded and notes might be taken for the accuracy of data collection. I presented letters of consent to the teachers detailing the study process and participant responsibilities and rights. The teachers were permitted to sign the consent form before leaving the meeting if they chose. However, none of the teachers chose to sign the consent form at the initial meeting. For confidentiality purposes, I asked each teacher if she preferred that I send communication to her personal emails in the future. All teachers agreed, and I sent consent forms to them via their personal email addresses. Each teacher was allowed 1 week to sign the consent letter, using an electronic signature, and return it to me via email. After receiving an electronically signed consent form, I electronically signed the form and returned it to the participant via email.

Three teachers requested an initial meeting on the telephone. I agreed and called them. I introduced myself, thanked the teachers for allowing me to call them, shared my study interest, provided details on the study, and gave an explanation of participants' responsibilities and rights. I provided photocopies of the study invitation, consent form, study information, and interview questions to the teachers via their personal email. Each

teacher was allowed 1 week to return the consent form with an electronic signature to me via email. After receiving an electronically signed consent form, I provided my electronic signature and returned the consent form to the participant via email.

Trustworthiness

After I received 12 signed consent letters, I scheduled interview times via email. Interviews were scheduled to occur over three weeks, based on teacher availability. To ensure trustworthiness, participants selected locations for interview sessions. During the interviews, I reminded the teachers that interviews would be audio-recorded and that I might take notes during the sessions. To further ensure trustworthiness and manage any potential conflicts of interest, I informed the teachers that notes would be written using honest reporting for accuracy of findings and reduction of researcher bias. Honest reporting is necessary for accuracy of findings and reduction of researcher bias (Creswell, 2012b). I encouraged the teachers to give honest responses by noting their responses would provide me with needed data because limited research is available on the study phenomenon.

After the interview, I asked the teachers not to share the discussions and their responses to questions with future participants to avoid response bias. Response bias occurs when participant answers do not align with their true thoughts or behaviors, which affects the validity and reliability of data (Williams, 2018). I transcribed audio-recorded interview responses following interviews. To further ensure trustworthiness of data collection, teachers were allowed to view transcribed responses. I submitted a draft of transcribed interview responses to each participant via email. Participants were permitted

to review, correct, approve, and submit comments or questions about the transcription to me via email within 7 days. The participants did not submit additional comments or questions pertaining to their review of the transcripts. This process was also used to assure the accuracy and credibility of data (Creswell, 2012b).

Participants' Rights and Protection

I provided confidentiality to participants by protecting their identity. The pseudonym, southern state elementary school (SSES) was used when referring to the study school. I did not put the names of participants on any data, so no one at the school would know who offered responses. I assigned an identification code to all participants. They were identified using a code such as: participant 1 (P1), participant 2 (P2), participant 3 (P3), and so forth. All data (i.e., audio-taped interview responses, transcriptions, lesson plan reviews, etc.) were systematized in electronic archives to participant codes assigned to each teacher. General demographic data are provided only in this document (Table 1). The demographic data consisted of the pseudonym, grade taught, and number of years as a teacher. Participants were offered off-site interviews to insure they felt comfortable with their confidentiality. Overall, participants were respected and treated ethically, without judgment. In the event, a participant chose to discontinue the interview; I would excuse the participant without bias. None of the participants chose to discontinue their interviews.

Data Collection

I gathered data for this descriptive case study using two collection tools, interviews and lesson plan reviews. The interviews were used as the primary data source

and lesson plan reviews were used to provide more in-depth information. According to Yin (2014), the use of two or more sources of data can add to the credibility research findings. Additionally, specifics of data may emerge with the use of multiple sources of data, which may not occur with just one data source (Creswell, 2012b). In the following text I detailed justification for data collection methods, sufficiency of data collection, data collection processes, how I kept track of data, and my role as a researcher.

Justification for Data Collection Methods

I obtained data to explore how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies from verbal explanations (interviews) and review of archived documents (lesson plans) received from teachers at the study school. Teachers' verbal explanations and written lesson plans were appropriate data for collection because observations, interviews, and review of documents are common sources of data for qualitative case study research (Creswell, 2012a; Locke, Silverman, & Spirduso, 2010). The teachers' perceptions provided me with needed data because limited research is available on the study phenomenon. Additionally, more in-depth information, beyond interviewees' responses, was obtained through teachers' lesson plans. According to researchers (Creswell, 2012b; Gläser & Laudel, 2013), when various sources of data are collected, the accuracy of data findings are enhanced. Rolfe (2006) supports using various sources of data to confirm results. The teachers' perceptions and reported practices permitted me to gain a deeper understanding of the study phenomenon (Merriam, 2015).

Sufficiency of Data Collection

I selected semi-structured interviews and a review of social studies lesson plans as data collection instruments for this case study. According to Creswell (2012b), interviews utilizing open-ended questions, permit participants to share their experiences on perspectives without being restrained by findings from previous research. I conducted 12 semi-structured interviews, which consisted of 15 open-ended questions (Appendix B), aligned to research questions. Semi-structured interviews were sufficient for data collection for this study because this tool permitted me to probe, understand, and clarify responses, which increases the validity of data (Galletta, 2013; McCart, 2013; McLeod, 2014). I collected 5 (1 week of) social studies lesson plans from each of the 12 participants to gather more in-depth information beyond participant responses. Each set of lesson plans covered 5 consecutive days of social studies lessons. I examined the 12 sets of lesson plans to explore how the teachers planned for integration of PBIS with social studies instruction. I used the lesson plans as a collection tool to support the corroboration of findings (Yin, 2014).

I chose social studies because of the association of the purposes of both this academic study and PBIS. The purposes of both elementary social studies and PBIS are to provide students with tools to understand, make informed decisions, and positively participate in the world. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) defined social studies in 1994 as "the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence" (National Council for the Social Studies, 2010, p. 217). The NCSS Task Force on Revitalizing Citizenship Education (2001) affirmed that, "The core

mission of social studies education is to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to become effective citizens" (p. 319). PBIS is an approach to establishing social culture and behavior needs to help students achieve social and academic success (Horner et al., 2015). Because of these factors, I considered a review of social studies lesson plans to be sufficient as a data collection instrument. By viewing what teachers' social studies lesson plans indicated about applications of social skills, I hoped to gain more in-depth information about how teachers integrate PBIS with instruction to engage students in learning.

An interview protocol document (Appendix C) and a lesson plan review protocol document (Appendix D) were used to structure and direct the collection of data. I adapted the interview and lesson plan review protocols from the same source, called Questions to Guide Instruction, designed by Chaparro et al. (2015), available online through public access. The interview protocol consisted of the interviewee identification code, number of years as a teacher, date and time of interview, interview questions, a checklist for probes used, and researcher comments (Appendix C). The lesson plan protocol consisted of a checklist of items for investigating teacher plans for using instructional time (Knight, 2011) and researcher comments (Appendix D). The lesson plan protocol document was used to determine if teacher verbal responses matched written lesson plans. I considered both protocol documents as sufficient resources for determining alignment of interview responses and lesson plan reviews to the research questions:

1. How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with social studies to facilitate instruction?
2. How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning?

Data Collection Processes

The process for generating data began after teachers signed consent forms, which were used to verify voluntary participation in the study, as well as permit me to audio record and take notes during interview sessions. After obtaining 15 participants, interview times were scheduled for 3 weeks and held at mutually agreed-upon locations, at the end of school day. Teachers were asked to bring a copy of one week (5 consecutive days) of social studies lesson plans to the interview session. I asked the teachers not to place their names on the lesson plans to protect the identity of participants. I matched lesson plans to participants' ID codes.

Interviews. The first phase of the data collection process consisted of conducting interview sessions according to scheduled times. When a participant arrived for the interview, I greeted her and re-informed her about the interview process. The participant was assigned a participant code for identification purposes. Lesson plans were collected from participant and identified by matching to participant's assigned code. The collection of data began by interviewing the participant, using the interview protocol (Appendix C). I recorded the discussion during the interview session via audio recorder, and written notes were taken, using a protocol/checklist (Appendix C). The participant

was interviewed using the interview protocol. Interview sessions ranged from 45 to 60 minutes.

During each interview session, I asked participants the same 15 open-ended questions (Appendix B). The questions were asked to explore how participant integrate PBIS with social studies instruction to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Participants were advised to answer questions according to what they actually do and reminded that interviews would be audio recorded and notes may be taken. I added probing questions to the interview protocol to clarify responses (Appendix B) and gather more information (Galletta, 2013; Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003) about the study phenomena. Probes used during interviews were documented on the interview protocol checklist. I took handwritten notes during interview sessions to indicate how participants responded. Non-verbal utterances, along with verbal responses, were noted and used to gain a richer understanding of what data may indicate (Braun, & Clarke, 2006). After interviews, I thanked each participant for their participation in the study. Following interviews, I transcribed audio-taped responses and sent them to participants via their personal email, so that they could check the accuracy of transcribed data (transcript checking).

Lesson Plan Reviews. I conducted the second phase of data collection after I transcribed audio-taped responses from participants. During this phase, collected lesson plans were reviewed to obtain data beyond participant interview responses, and to provide in-depth information to confirm what participants reported in interviews. I reviewed the social studies lesson plans using the lesson plan review protocol checklist

(Appendix D). The protocol was developed from the PBIS framework, literature review, and study focus. Using the protocol, I determined if participants' lesson plans indicated items specific to their responses to interview questions by checking either "yes" or "no" in indicated columns. I also noted how the participants addressed the items.

Keeping Track of Data

I used two audio-recording devices to record interview responses in the event of technical malfunctioning of one of the devices (Creswell, 2009). I assigned the transcribed responses to the appropriate participant identification code. To ensure confidentiality, all data (i.e., audio-taped interview responses, transcriptions, handwritten interview notes, lesson plan reviews, data analysis reports, etc.) were systematized into electronic archives, using the participants' codes. All data were placed in password-protected files and stored on my personal computer for security purposes for 5 years beyond completion of this study. When the 5 year period expires, I will delete all data filed on my computer. A file shredding application (i.e., Eraser) will be used to permanently delete the data files from my computer. This process will cause the data to be overwritten entirely, which cannot be recovered by anyone. Paper data will be shredded and discarded.

Role of the Researcher

I currently serve as an education director at a private, faith-based institution and have served in this capacity for more than 10 years. Because of my experience as an educator (both public and private), I understand the significance of delivering instruction for both behavioral and academic skills. I am not affiliated with the study school, and

this study is separate from any role I currently serve in or have held. The study site is located in a local school district, where I have never worked in any position. I chose the study site because it is the first elementary school in the local area to implement PBIS. Although I have not worked in any position at the study school, I have experience working in public education on all levels (elementary, middle grades, and high school), and understand the protocol of public schools.

Before the study, I had no professional or private relationship with teachers at the study school, and no experience with PBIS implementation to affect data collection. To avoid bias, during data collection and analysis, I followed the five characteristics of a good researcher, developed by Yin (2014). The characteristics of a good researcher consist of asking questions specific to the study, listening attentively, maintaining adaptability (adjusting interview questioning; using props), and persevering to understand issues (Yin, 2014). In addition, I chose not to impose my opinions or interrupt participants when expressing their perceptions. I used two strategies of validity to assure accuracy of findings and further avoid bias (Creswell, 2012b). These strategies consisted of triangulation and transcript checking to ensure participants' were treated professionally and ethically according to the standards of research using human subjects (National Institute of Health, 2005). Triangulation entailed using more than one data collection method to assure the validity of research (Prashant, 2013), as well as confirm results (Rolfe, 2006). I collected data through interviews and review of lesson plans.

I submitted interview transcriptions to each participant via email. Participants were given 7 days to review their transcriptions. During this period, participants read

their transcripts and made notations on the transcript if the interview responses were transcribed incorrectly. All participants responded with the single comment, "Yes," via email, indicating they agreed with how their interview responses were transcribed. The participants did not submit additional comments or questions pertaining to their review of the transcripts. Collected data were password protected and stored on my personal computer. The data will remain stored on my personal computer for 5 years beyond completion of this study. At the close of the 5 years, I will permanently delete the data from my files.

Data Analysis

This study was conducted to explore how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction as well as perceptions of teachers on PBIS as facilitating and engaging students in learning. I used a qualitative approach to analyze data gathered from interviews and lesson plan reviews. Qualitative analysis is the systematic process of applying logical techniques for describing, evaluating, and condensing data to answer research questions (Northern Illinois University, 2005). According to Creswell (2012b), qualitative data analysis is an inductive process for summarizing, interpreting, and validating data throughout processes of data collection, while maintaining the integrity of data. Qualitative analysis procedures consist of using concepts, themes, and categories to organize data (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The goal of qualitative data analysis is to attain common themes by organizing data into codes, phrases, and categories (Creswell, 2012a). I conducted thematic analysis to reduce and sort data. During thematic analysis, I applied a priori, open, and axial coding strategies to interview and lesson plan data. I

assigned a priori codes from the four constructs of the PBIS framework (modeling, prompting, monitoring, and reinforcing) to interview and lesson plan data. I conducted open coding to reduce paragraphs and sentences to phrases or single words, based on conceptually related categories. I conducted axial coding by searching for relationships among the open codes. I then searched for patterns among the axial codes for relationships to determine themes. In this section, I present data preparation and processes of thematic analysis.

Preparing Data for Analysis

The initial steps of data analysis consisted of transcribing interview responses and conducting transcript checking (Creswell, 2012b; Merriam, 2015). Transcription, the first step of the data analysis process (Bailey, 2008), was used to ensure the accuracy of content (Jenks, 2011). Following transcription of data, transcript checking was conducted to ensure transcribed responses were documented according to participants' intentions (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). I describe procedures of transcribing data and transcript checking below.

Transcribing data. Following interview sessions, I transcribed audio-taped responses, within 48 hours. This short time table was used to preserve the integrity of interview responses (Kovacs, 2005). According to Bailey (2008), the researcher (interviewee) should perform the transcribing process because it is necessary to capture tone of voice, speed, emphasis, and pauses, and so forth to collect all details. I listened to taped responses on the audio file and typed participant responses onto a Microsoft Word file on my personal computer. I developed a chart per interview participant with

responses in one column to be utilized further in thematic analysis. This process made it easier for me to identify specific words or phrases. I used speaker tabs to indicate when I was speaking and when the participant was speaking. I labeled the tabs as researcher or participant, using the assigned identification code: participant 1 (P1), participant 2 (P2), participant 3 (P3), and so forth. I placed transcribed data in files matched to participants' identification codes. After transcribing responses, I listened to the audio file again and proofread my documentation at the same time to check the accuracy of transcriptions. I used lesson plans as an additional data source to provide a better understanding of the study phenomena and corroborate findings with the interview data (Creswell, 2012b). Because the lesson plans were already written, there was no need for me to transcribe them.

Transcript checking. After transcribing responses, I conducted transcript checking to ensure the validity, accuracy, and credibility of transcribed data (Creswell, 2012b); however, this process produces minimal accuracy of findings. While this process produces minimal accuracy of findings, it permits the interviewee an opportunity to review, edit, and clarify what was said during the interview (Hagans, Dobrow, & Chafe, 2009). A disadvantage of transcript checking is the loss of data if the interviewee chooses to remove response data (Hagans, Dobrow, & Chafe, 2009). According to Hagans, Dobrow, and Chafe (2009), researcher bias could result if an interviewee chooses to remove valuable data. These concerns were not a problem for my study, because the participants chose not to remove any response data from their transcribed responses.

I submitted the draft of transcribed interview responses to each participant via email. Participants were given a period of 7 days to review their transcripts. During this period, the participants read the transcripts and made notations on the transcripts if the interview responses were transcribed incorrectly. All participants responded with the single comment, "Yes," via email, indicating they agreed with how their interview responses were transcribed. The participants did not submit additional comments or questions pertaining to the review of their transcripts or request any transcribed responses to be removed. All audio recordings, interview protocol checklist, and notes are secured in a filing cabinet at my home.

Data Analysis Results

A Priori Coding

Following the organization of data, the first qualitative reduction process conducted was a priori coding of interview and lesson plan review data to address the indicated problem and RQ1 of my study (Appendices C & D). Interview questions (IQ) 1-8 were used to gather data for RQ1 (Appendix C). I organized data from both data sources by assigning a priori codes. By definition, a priori is the "application of pre-determined codes, rather than codes that emerge from analysis of data" (McDonnell, 2018, p. 1).

I reviewed the constructs of the PBIS framework to determine a priori codes for analyzing data. A priori codes, adapted from the four constructs of the PBIS framework for instruction were: modeling, prompting, monitoring, and reinforcing (Appendix F), were used to analyze interview and lesson plan data. The four constructs, referred to as

gerunds (i.e., -ing suffix), were pre-determined as codes for analyzing data because the terms indicated processes (Saldana, 2015). The four constructs were used as key concepts for a priori coding to explore how teachers integrate PBIS processes with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. I adapted definitions of constructs of PBIS from OSEP Technical Assistance Center (2019) and Simonsen, et al. (2015) to determine assignments (Appendix F). Details of the a priori coding process and assignments are explained in the following text.

Coding process. A priori coding of interview and lesson plan data occurred in two cycles. During the first step of cycle one, I read through each transcript and lesson plan without marking, while making notes of my general impressions of the data. Secondly, I reviewed the data, using protocols and checklists for the review of interview responses (Appendix C) and lesson plan data (Appendix D). I searched for key words and phrases that supported each PBIS construct. During the third step, I used Microsoft word highlighting to color code data that aligned to a priori codes: modeling, prompting, monitoring, and reinforcing.

The following codes were assigned to data based on definitions of a priori codes (Appendix F). Data that supported *modeling* indicated how teachers demonstrated instructional strategies to clarify teaching objectives and learning expectations. Data that aligned to modeling were colored green. Data that supported *prompting* indicated how teachers provided opportunities for students to respond and how teachers organized and managed small groups of students, while working on group assignments. Data aligned to prompting were colored magenta. Data that supported *monitoring* indicated how teachers

visually scanned students, physically moved about in the classroom, and interacted with students via verbal or non-verbal communication. Data aligned to monitoring were colored yellow. Data that supported *reinforcing* indicated how teachers provided performance feedback, made students aware of their progress, offered students chances to make corrections, and reviewed expectations. Data aligned to *reinforcing* were colored blue. Samples of a priori coding from interview and lesson plan data sets are presented in Appendices G and H. The tables include the data sources, raw data that supports the assigned code, and participant codes.

Modeling. Modeling refers to a pedagogical strategy a teacher uses helps internalize techniques and apply them to learn content. With this strategy, the teacher provides students with a clear example of a skill she expects them to perform. This strategy permits students to first observe what the teacher expects them to do and then perform what they learned (Barlow, Frick, Barker, & Phelps, 2014). The results of a priori coding of interview data indicated that all participants explained the steps they took to clarify the goals of lessons, yet, they commented about using varied techniques of modeling. The modeling techniques used by the teachers were engaging students through showing enthusiasm, asking questions, checking for understanding, and maintaining a steady pace. The teachers shared how they explained concepts and modeled expected outcomes using tactile, visual, auditory, or kinesthetic instructional techniques.

Interview data from P1, P2, P6, P9, and P11 (Grades 1-3) revealed these teachers demonstrated how to use critical thought processes to help student understand new concepts. According to the teachers, the demonstrations helped the students understand

how to verbalize learning and connect to the new concepts. Six teachers mentioned they modeled higher-order thinking (HOT) strategies to engage students, yet they described different strategies. Teacher P5 shared she demonstrated how to use decision making to make the new concept more relevant to the students. Teacher P12 (3rd grade) explained she modeled how to use the KWL (What You Know, What You Want to Learn, What You Learned) technique to make concepts more relevant to students. Teacher P10 (5th grade) planned a lesson to be a real-world lesson. She demonstrated how to use interpersonal learning strategies of communicating and connecting (i.e., listening, talking, and understanding). She expected her students to use the demonstration to help them engage in a discussion during a group activity.

Each of the 12 teachers commented on how they used examples to make new concepts relevant. For example, first-grade teacher P9 described this as "examples they can relate to" and made new information relevant by linking examples of the new concept "with something that they already know and understand." Another pedagogical strategy for this approach was linking the new concept to a real-world example. However, exemplars of "real world examples" varied from teacher to teacher. For example, P5 (5th grade) incorporated "real life examples" if something related to that concept was recently on the news. According to P5, "This [discussion reality] helps the students to add their knowledge of the concept." Teacher P4 (5th grade) thought this was true of all academic material, not just new concepts: "I believe whatever you are teaching, students should be able to connect it to real life." Teacher P4 mentioned that when she taught about measurements in mathematics, she wore a measuring tape around her neck (modeling a

seamstress) and allowed students to try on clothing that was either too large or too small for them to wear. Because the students understood appropriate sizing, they were able to relate to the importance of taking accurate measurements.

Teacher P2 (2nd grade) stated, "I make new concepts more relevant for students by connecting them to students' real life experiences." Teacher P11 (2nd grade) maintained that the combination of real world examples and "what they already know" made learning "more useful and practical." Teacher P11 used videos and nonfiction stories to help students build backgrounds for new concepts and engage the teacher-guided discussions. Teacher P6 (3rd grade) described practicality as more enduring knowledge, "That real world connection helps information stick and gets them [students] interested in learning." Teacher P6 shared how she used an example of building a bridge to help students connect previously learned concepts to new concepts. Teacher P8 (4th grade) created relevancy by using an example of a four step staircase. Teacher P8 stated (numbers added):

> I make new concepts more relevant by helping students to see: (1) what the connections are previously; (2) why they are learning about this concept; (3) how it can be used in the real world, and (4) how it connects to topics of interest.

Teacher P8 stated that this technique helps her students, determine what is needed to move from one step to the next step.

Lesson plan data did not contain evidence that modeling was planned for in each lesson. Teacher P3 (4th Grade) indicated on lesson plans that various concepts would be

connected, but did not write details of how. However, interview data contained evidence that all teachers modeled how they related new concepts to previously taught concepts.

Prompting. Interview response data that indicated how participants used triggers to provide background knowledge for students to be successful in the lesson was labeled as prompting. Data indicated all participants prompted students by using the standard question-and-answer strategy during instructional time. Prompting involved asking direct questions, to solicit evidence of student knowledge, or to clarify understanding. For example, P1 (1st grade) stated she asked direct questions, "to clear-up misconceptions." Teacher P9 (1st grade) went a step further by declaring that she prompted her first-grade students to "think critically" by asking questions that went beyond the basics. Teacher P9 stated, "Instead, I ask, What if…? And Why not …? questions. I want students to think critically. I will tell them, 'The answer is not in the book, but in you!'"

By the second grade, based on response data, students were prompted to provide information on their knowledge through additional venues. One example was P2, who gave her second-grade students "opportunities to respond during instructional time… in the format of journal reflections, discussions, and parking lot questions" (see Appendix E for definitions of pedagogical terminology). I noted, yet it takes time to address a student's direct answer to a question in the classroom and simultaneously share the teaching moment with the rest of the students, it takes more time to review students' journals to determine their understanding. There are benefits to both: individual students benefit from the teacher's responses in journals, yet the whole class benefits when responses are given in the class.

Similar to P2, P6 (3rd grade) expanded on the standard questions and answers with a variety of techniques. Teacher P6 stated that she incorporated contemporary technology by soliciting student questions through text messages (see Appendix E for definitions of pedagogical terminology). Teacher P6 also stated that she used video and pictures (images) as prompts to provide background knowledge for students who lack the background knowledge needed to be successful in the lesson. Teacher P8 (4th grade) expressed how she prompted her students with positive peer pressure when students gave incorrect answers. Interview data reflected all participants affirmed the use of questioning techniques to clarify students' understanding. The question prompts were also used to review prior knowledge to link the previously taught concepts to the new concepts.

Lesson plan data indicated that all participants indicated they would engage students in observable ways, yet techniques varied. Plans of P1, P2, P6, P9, and P11 indicated students would work independently, and the teacher would circulate throughout the classroom to assist students. Plans of P3, P7, P8, P10, and P12 indicated students would be engaged in class discussions. Also, P10 indicated on her plans the use of guided notes. Teacher P4 indicated on her lesson plans that she would utilize expert groups via a heterogeneous Jigsaw grouping technique, and P5 indicated her students would work cooperatively to review, discuss, and compose quiz questions.

Further, nine of 12 participants indicated on lesson plans that struggling students could work with a partner, whereas, three participants used the term peer-mediated instruction (P4, P5, & P10). All three of the participants, who used the term peer-

mediated, instruction taught 5th grade. Teacher P12 (3rd grade) indicated on her plans the use of cooperative grouping to help struggling students. Two of the teachers (P1 & P9) indicated on their plans that they would assist students; both were first-grade teachers.

Monitoring. I noted a range of PBIS monitoring strategies participants used to check student engagement in learning. Strategies used by participants, Grades 1-4, were similar; however, monitoring strategies used by fifth-grade teachers were varied. First-grade teachers shared that they monitor by listening to what the students had to say. Second-grade teachers indicated that they monitored students by soliciting student responses to the material. By third grade, data showed teachers monitored by proximity. The teachers located themselves near students during instruction and class activities to manage classroom discipline and student engagement. The teachers shared how moving consistently through the classroom permitted them to assess student progress, build rapport with students, and build student confidence.

According to P8 (4th grade), "by this age, the proximity of the teacher had a more tactful and sensitive influence on students who were questioning, confused, or losing focus." Teacher P8 (3rd grade) commented that she taught on her feet and not in her seat because she can often "clear up misconceptions just by walking by and looking at how a student is working..." Teacher P6 (3rd grade) acknowledged that she allowed her students to ask questions on their phones and whiteboards. The whiteboards were hand-held and small enough for students to have at their desks. In addition to texting questions from their phones to the teachers, the students wrote their responses on their whiteboards and held it up for the teacher to view. Teacher P6 supported that this technique replaced

direct student questions and contributed to a quieter classroom. Teacher P8 (4th grade) described the merit of mobility for monitoring students' engagement in learning by stating, "I have the expectation that if you are in the class, you are in the class to learn…I am walking around looking at their work and talking with them one-on-one."

By fifth-grade, data indicated proximity monitoring benefitted them in two ways. First, participants used proximity monitoring to keep students on task. Secondly, proximity monitoring provided the participants with quick and regular observations of students' engagement in learning. Fifth-grade teacher, P10, described an elaborate monitoring system, which she called "this beautiful idea." She reported that she used the color trio of red, yellow, and green, in keeping with the colors of stop-and-go lights, "with which every student is familiar." She explained that students were given color-coded popsicle sticks. When prompted, the students could hold up one of the popsicle sticks to indicate their level of understanding. Teacher P10 declared:

> If they really understood what was being discussed, they could hold up the green popsicle stick. Also, if they felt that they could teach someone, they could hold up the green popsicle stick. If they felt like they had heard this before, but was not really sure…they could touch hold up the yellow popsicle stick yellow. If they had never heard it before they could hold up the red popsicle stick. And based off of where we were, kids could either ask each other questions, or ask me questions.

A goal of P10 was to provide multiple venues for her students to communicate. Also, by fifth-grade, according to P5, performance on exams has taken on additional requirements for teachers that command more monitoring time than test-taking had in earlier grades.

Lesson plan review data indicated that all participants indicated plans for monitoring student performance during instructional time, however, the teachers specified different strategies. Teachers P1 and P9, both first-grade teachers, planned to circulate, throughout the classroom, taking note of and assisting students who were struggling. Teachers P3, P7, P8 (4^{th} grade teachers), P10 (5^{th} grade), and P12 (3^{rd} grade) planned to evaluate student participation during class discussions and written assignments. Teachers P10 and P12 planned to have students complete guided notes, P2 (2^{nd} grade), P6 (3^{rd} grade), and P11 (2^{nd} grade) planned to review student work to check for mastery of concepts. Both fifth-grade teachers, P4 and P5, planned to evaluate students based on participation during group work, but each planned a different strategy for evaluating. Teacher P4 planned for students to survey group participation and performance of classmates in 5 areas, using a rubric scale. The scale indicated: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Not Sure, Agree, Strongly Agree. Teacher P5, also a fifth-grade teacher, planned to observe students as they worked together developing quiz questions. The quiz questions would be used by the teacher to assess student knowledge.

Reinforcing. Interview data indicated that all participants reinforced student learning. Data showed participants used praise and material rewards such as prizes, to reinforce students who answered questions about course material correctly. However, P11 (2^{nd} grade) asserted, "Tone of voice is very important to student's success. Students

listen to everything, so I try to remember to use a positive tone." Teacher P12 (3rd grade) commented, "I allow students to experience my excitement!" This response not only reinforced her students' correct answers, but, according to the teacher, also increased engagement of her third-grade students.

Teacher P6 (3rd grade) commented that she used emotional reinforcement and noted the importance of tailored and specific feedback. She shared how she reinforced her third-grade students by identifying and explaining the aspects of their behavior that she was complimenting. Teacher P7 (4th grade) also named the positive behavior to specify the reason for the compliment. Further, all participants shared how they redirected incorrect responses of students by allowing them to ponder their mistakes. For example, P1 (1st grade) declared she redirects the thinking of her students "to assist them in coming to the correct answer on their own." Teacher P5 (5th grade) described her strategies for improving her students' test-taking skills: "I go through test-taking skills type exercises to guide their thinking and to guide them toward the right answer by asking them to identify clearly incorrect answers and key words that reveal the intent of the test question." Teacher P12 (3rd grade) encouraged her students to look at the question more critically. She remarked, "If they look at the question in a different way, they may come up with the correct answer." Teacher P12 assumed that this process needs to be monitored to determine effectiveness, which aligns with monitoring.

Four participants (P9, P6, P4, and P10) acknowledged avoiding the "i" and "w" words – incorrect and wrong – when handling incorrect answers. P4 justified it this way: "In my observations, when you [tell a student] 'you are wrong,' a lot of times kids will

shut down and they will think that they are wrong and will not search for the correct answer.' Four participants (P1, P9, P2, and P6) also affirmed they involve other students to correct an incorrect response. This technique included having another student provide the correct answer or taking time for peer-tutoring. For example, P9 (1st grade) said, "If they respond incorrectly or fail to respond, I will ask another student to assist them."

Overall, interview data findings revealed all participants affirmed they used strategies for reinforcing student learning. However, lesson plan review data did not indicate details or strategies for reinforcing student learning. After I applied *a priori* codes to data sets to reduce data (Appendix I), I conducted open and axial coding to determine themes (Appendix J). I provide details of the processes below.

Open Coding

After I completed the a priori coding, detailed above, I continued thematic analysis of interview data with an open coding process. I conducted open coding to reduce paragraphs and sentences to phrases or single words. I organized similar data using code words/phrases, based on conceptually-related categories, such states as commitment, investment, involvement, dedication, devotion, allegiance, participation, contributions, engrossment, and inter-connections, or lack thereof (Appendix J). Open coding was followed by axial coding of the categories during the third phase. Samples of the open and axial coding assignments are display in Table 2. I conducted axial coding by searching the open codes for relationships among the open codes. I then searched for patterns among the axial categories for relationships. I attempted to "identify the fundamental meaning of the theme" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 70) during this phase. I

Table 2

Axial and open coding samples

Axial code	Open codes	Participant code	Data sample
Students as Tutors	Peer tutoring, student partner, student helpers, student facilitator	P4	Peer-mediated instruction; gifted students assist peers
		P5	Peer-mediated instruction during group work
		P11	Utilize students as tutors
Student Collaboration	Student collaboration, peer-mediated instruction, cooperative learning, student facilitators, peer language	P3	Students work together to discover answers
		P6	Student as facilitators … "peers speak peer language."
Students Sharing Work	Struggling students work with gifted student, peer language, pairing students, shoulder buddy, group projects, teamwork	P1	Students share answers with shoulder buddy before responding in class
		P7	Students share with the group what they know
		P6	Students with background knowledge pair with students who lack background knowledge and share what they know
Maximizing Student Success	Teacher assistance, learning modalities, immediate feedback, encouragement	P2	Reviews work with student for mastery of concepts
		P3	Provides immediate feedback during class discussions and written assignments
Minimizing Student Misbehavior	teacher support, teacher facilitator, teacher assistance	P9	Reinforce student positive behavior with compliments to minimize misbehavior
		P8	"I want students to feel that I am supportive and that I believe that they can be successful."
Expected Behaviors	Posted performance expectations, behavior rubric, encouragement	P7	Encourage students to get back on task when off-task
		P12	Uses a behavior rubric
Equitable Treatment of Misconduct	Equitable treatment, fairness, non-judgment, same expectation for everyone	P4	Evaluate students based on participation during group work
		P11	Provides equitable responses to all student groups…handles each case using the same steps

conducted the write-up of the theme development during the final phase. Throughout this phase, conceptually related patterns were integrated and merged into themes (Howitt &

Cramer, 2007) pertaining to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2012). I illustrated how each theme emerged in Appendix K. The following four themes emerged from the open and axial coded data: Peer-Mediated Instruction (Theme 1), Teacher-Student Relationships (Theme 2), Reinforce Appropriate Behavior (Theme 3), and Optimize Student Learning (Theme 4). How findings were categorized and merged into the four themes is explained in the following text and illustrated in Appendix K.

Theme 1: Peer-Mediated Instruction

Theme 1 reflected student-student relationships that emerged from data on teacher responses about integrating PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The following three subthemes emerged from responses of participants to determine theme 1: students as tutors; student collaboration; and students sharing work. The three patterns were merged to determine the theme, Peer-Mediated Instruction. How the patterns were determined and merged into the theme is detailed below.

Students as tutors. An example of utilizing students as tutors was the interactions of four students placed on the same team to complete an assignment, declared by P11 (2^{nd} grade). Teacher P11 used peer-tutoring and team assignment to motivate and encourage students who are hesitant about performing in class. Within a student group, the peer-tutor provided knowledge and practical help to the tutee without singling out the tutee. Teacher P11 also used peer-mediated instruction to increase opportunities for students to respond. She declared “this strategy also provides social learning opportunities for students which helps promote appropriate communication and

social behaviors. The data indicated peer-mediated instruction or peer-tutoring was frequently used by all teachers.

Teacher P5 (5th grade) and P6 (3rd grade) acknowledged they used peer-mediated instruction in the conventional way. Teacher P5 uses peer-mediated instruction when her students are doing group work, answering questions, or working on a project. She noted that during peer-mediated instruction, students are more willing to engage in learning because peer pressure is reduced, and peer support is provided. Teacher P6 uses peer-mediated instruction when teaching a new concept. She allows her students time during instruction to talk to each other about the new concept. She affirmed students can explain concepts to each other, where they did not understand what the teacher said. Fifth-grade teacher P4 uses peer-tutoring by allowing gifted students to tutor students with failing grade point averages (less than 70 points). She stated, "... [peer-tutoring] stretches my gifted kids because they must make sure that they had lesson plans that address certain standards so they could teach other students in the school [who] were not actually performing."

Teacher P4 affirmed gifted students designed their own plans to help the tutor connect to the standard requirements. She stated that tutees accept the tutor's advice because of the relationship established between them. Teacher P4 also declared, "…they think of things [teaching strategies] that we don't necessarily think of!" Teacher P3 developed the Peer Leader Program that included peer-mediated instruction in which older students tutor younger students. Teacher P3 stated, "We use our 5th grade Peer Leaders (All Girls Group) to work with first-grade students…during their recess. The

program has been successful and rewarding for both parties." In her class, P3 pairs a student with a higher ability and a student with a lower ability to help the lower ability student understand lesson instructions. Based on the same concept, P12 (3rd grade) engages students through peer-mediated instruction during application time. Teacher P12 stated:

> I put students in groups and allow them to talk. Of course, the discussion is guided. I will give them a question that relates to the content. For example, "What do you know about Japan?"…This strategy can also help to inform students who lack prerequisite knowledge.

Teacher P6 asserted that peer-mediated instruction has a deeper basis. She affirmed peer-mediation as a way to correct misinformation more diplomatically so students are not discouraged to continue to learn when corrected for a wrong answer. Teacher P6 thought that it was effective, as well as efficient, because students can sometimes accomplish what teachers cannot because "peers speak peer language." She shared:

> When I explain a concept, I give students time to talk to each other about what I just explained…'because I promise you, you can say something, and they don't understand it. But their friend can say it to them in the same way, and they get it!

Teacher P10 claimed that her fifth-grade students tended to "listen more or lean towards their peers" than to their teachers. She stated, "I utilize peer-mediated instruction a lot because I know sometimes students learn better from other students."

Student collaboration. Most teachers shared how they use student collaboration to help students better understand concepts. Collaboration is used by Grade 1-5 teachers to engage students in learning via teamwork. Through collaboration, the students develop skills to think share ideas between two students or within a larger group. Collaborative learning approaches encompass cooperative learning, higher order thinking, decision making, critical thinking, and problem solving (Brulles & Brown, 2018).

Teacher P8 (4th grade) claimed she used a collaboration strategy to encourage students to learn from each other. Teacher P8 believed that a more knowledgeable student can present details about concepts and the less knowledgeable student can share his/her knowledge without fear of being ostracized. She stated, "I pair a student with someone who I know can do the work, for about 5 -10 minutes of the class time." Teacher P8 encourages her students to talk with a shoulder buddy and use think/pair/share strategies (see Appendix E). She assesses the academic results of student teams with a 'ticket out the door.' The next day, P8 assembles collaborative student groups based on their understanding of the skills/content assessed the previous day.

Teacher P11 (2nd grade) chose students for collaborative teams by de-emphasizing race and culture, thereby engaging them regardless of the ethnic group or culture. Her purpose for the collaborative team was to encourage communication and cooperation between the students as they learned from each other. She stated, "I don't look at students based on ethnicities. I look at them based on academic needs and learning styles." The benefits of collaborative learning are: enhances problem solving skills,

develops social interaction, improves communication skills, inspires critical thinking, and reduces learning anxiety (Lorcher, 2019).

The teachers described various ways they engage students in collaborative interactions, such as cooperative learning, problem-centered instruction, and conflict resolution (Appendix E). Teacher P1 (1st grade) specifically gave her students time "to talk to their shoulder buddy (see Appendix E for explanation of pedagogical terminology) before they respond." Teacher P9 taught first grade, but used what she considered to be collaborative peer-mediated instruction. She provided the following example of what she classified as an "excellent" engagement and learning tool:

> After introducing a new concept, I will ask a student to explain what they heard me say to another student. Then the other student will tell me what they heard the other student say and compare it to what they understood me to say. Based on the responses--if either missed it, I will repeat the instruction.

Students Sharing Work. The previous findings reflected the essence of student collaboration; however, methods for how students shared work varied. Some teachers limited it to brief discussions of written assignments, while other teachers encouraged students to share and discuss answers on written assignments with the student next to them (shoulder buddy). Teacher P12 (3rd grade) acknowledged that her "students review and share their study guide notes in small groups." She clarified that when students are having difficulty understanding lesson content, they can look over their shoulder (when sitting in rows) or to a partner seated next to them (when sitting in a group) and ask for assistance from that student, when prompted.

Teacher P2 (2nd grade) allowed students to share work for both acceleration and enrichment purposes. Her class consists of students of mixed abilities: learning disabilities, general education, and gifted. Teacher P2 explained that she sometime pairs gifted students with non-gifted peers. She gives them activities (i.e., decision making, conflict resolution, and more) to advance (accelerate) and enhance (enrich) their understanding of the concept. Teacher P2 affirmed that during such activities, both students have opportunities to respond and feel equally comfortable when doing so. She stated, "This is especially helpful for students who tend to be less likely to offer responses independently." Similarly, P7 (4th grade) stated, "I attempt to engage all students by allowing them to work together in small groups so students can help each other and develop relationships." Teacher P7 commented that she used peer-mediated instruction to help students prepare for test. She was the only teacher in this study who said students were also expected to study on their own. Teacher P7 also allowed students with background knowledge to pair with students who lacked background knowledge to share what they knew. She provided a review guide to keep students on track. The guide consisted of questions that the pair answered together. She referred to this strategy as pair/share.

Theme 2: Teacher-Student Relationships

Two subthemes emerged from similar responses, affirming that all teachers sought to maximize student learning and minimize student misbehavior. These two patterns were merged to determine the theme, Teacher-Student Relationships. How the patterns were determined and merged into this theme is detailed below.

Maximizing student success. Despite the emphasis the teachers placed on collaborative student interactions, they also shared how they worked to develop personal, though professional, relationships with each of their students. This strategy was used to win the student's trust and solicit greater cooperation (P5, 5th grade and P8, 4th grade). The data showed that participants engaged students by treating them with affection and respect, personalized to each student's culture, personality, and personal needs. Participants indicated that developing teacher-student relationships involved time investments for designing classroom activities and structuring class time around individual student needs.

Personalization and reassurance through working teacher-student relationships were aimed at making every student successful, or at least feel that they could be successful. For example, P8 commented, "I want my fourth-grade students to feel that I am supportive and that I believe that they can be successful." Teacher P12 (3rd grade) said, "*More than anything else* [italics added for emphasis], I want them to know how much I want to help them be successful and how proud I am to be their teacher." Teacher P5 declared: "I believe it is important to first build a personal, but still professional relationship with them, and to let them know your expectations."

Harmonious and supportive teacher-student relationships had other benefits. P6 (3rd grade) argued in favor of establishing relationships because it made her more confident about managing student behavior: "I really try to build relationships in order to positively reinforce what happens and know better how to interact with my students…knowing how to adjust and understand." Teacher P8 (4th grade) believed that

good relationships kept order in the classroom: "I am just going to try to build relationships with the students because that makes a difference in student behavior and work ethics in your classroom." Teacher P3 (4th grade) shared that she felt the benefits of her relationships with students manifested most when students misbehaved. Teacher P3 minimized disrupted instructional time by soliciting the errant student's cooperation. She stated that she took them aside and in a soft, understanding tone, explained that she needed to teach this content and needed their cooperation to do it. "I ask for their cooperation, give a hug or high five, and it usually works." The teachers developed teacher-student relationships by persuading student cooperation.

Along with declaring the importance of establishing personal, but professional relationships with students, all participants stated they engaged students by treating them with respect. Teacher P4 (5th grade) felt teacher-student relationships were worthwhile because those she had established with her students mitigated student misconduct. She said it encouraged them to think about what they did and why it was wrong.

Minimizing student misbehavior. Although this part of the findings is about engaging the students, engagement depends upon the teacher-student relationships. One example of this was P12 (3rd grade), who expressed her relationship with students entails engaging with students. She maintained that this was a way to simultaneously prompt a child into positive behavior as well as model positive behavior for them. This focus is important to developing teacher-student relationships because students are more motivated to exhibit appropriate behavior when they know their teacher cares about them (Boyton & Boyton, 2016). All participants commented about the merits of establishing

appropriately affectionate and respectful relationships with the students. One participant, P9 (1st grade), used a "simple parental" strategy to ensure that she exhibited appropriate affectionate and respectful equitable responses. "I think: If that child was my child, how would I want that teacher to treat her?" Teacher P9 further acknowledged how she reinforced her student relationships with compliments that were specific about their positive behavior. She stated as an example: "Mary, I appreciate how you raised your hand and listened when Jimmy was answering the question."

No discrepant comments emerged from interview responses. Based on my understanding of perceptions of the participants, a good teacher-student relationship had the further benefit of encouraging students. Based on perceptions of all participants, students benefit from appropriately affectionate and respectful relationships with their teachers.

Theme 3: Reinforce Appropriate Behavior

Findings indicated all participants affirmed awareness of efforts to reinforce appropriate student behavior. Similar to the main theme of Teacher-Student Social Relationships, in which teachers engaged students by establishing personal, but professional relationships with them to obtain their cooperation, handling misconduct equitably also suggested engagement by soliciting student cooperation. Two subthemes were determined from similar responses: expected behaviors and equitable treatment of misconduct. The subthemes were merged to determine the theme: Reinforce Appropriate Behavior. How the subthemes were determined and merged into this theme is detailed below.

Expected behavior. All participants established a set of rules of expected behavior that applied to all students, although some modifications were applied based on the offense and the student offender's needs. Teacher P12 (3rd grade) acknowledged using a behavior rubric that provided students with a list of her expectations for positive behavior. Each student was given a copy of the rubric, and expectations were posted on a large chart in the classroom. Teacher P12 declared that she constantly referred "to classroom expectations (posted on board) when interacting with students with praise and correction. I do not single students out or classify them in a specific group." Teacher P7 (4th grade) "treats all students the same way." Teacher P4 (5th grade) stated that she treated all of her students equitably, declaring, "No student is more important than another student. I don't treat any of them differently. I hold high expectations for their learning and behavior."

Equitable treatment of misconduct. Data indicated that all participants used positive disciplinary feedback to engage students even when correcting misconduct, claiming they treated all students equitably. Similar to the theme, Teacher-Student Relationships, in which teachers engaged students by establishing appropriate relationships with them to obtain their cooperation, handling misconduct equitably also, suggested engagement by soliciting student cooperation. Teacher P3 (4th grade) pointed out that, "Even my students with disabilities understand a soft voice, high five, hugs, or asking for their cooperation [when handling misconduct]." All participants affirmed implementing equitable treatment when correcting misconduct.

The participants mentioned techniques they used to solicit student cooperation. Teacher P11 (2nd grade) shared how she discovered that immediate feedback, sensitivity to a student's specific behavioral needs, and searching for the cause, helped her handle misconduct. She acknowledged trying to provide equitable treatment to all student groups by handling each case using the same steps. She confirmed:

> First, I will ask the student what happened. Secondly, I will inquire about why it happened. Thirdly, I will ask the student to give me an alternative positive reaction. Then I will review the behavioral expectation rubric and class behavioral rules.

Teacher P8 (4th grade) emphasized the she managed students by handling misconduct equitably:

> I make sure that I am being consistent, but equitable responses mean that I am giving each student what they need. Some may require more attention, so I try to build relationships with the students, making sure that I am consistent and giving support, based on whatever their needs are.

As noted, all participants verbalized that giving the students equitable treatment entailed providing positive disciplinary feedback to engage students; however, strategies should be-used to meet students' specific behavioral needs. Teacher P9 considered treating students equitably as a useful way to distract her first-graders from misbehaving. She stated, "If a student is not listening or talking to a neighbor, I will give them a task to do. Such as, Johnny, please help me out, or Please go to the board and write these three points down." Rather than emphasize the misbehavior, P9 shared that it was better to

redirect the student which, encouraged appropriate behavior. She considered this equitable treatment because she would offer the opportunity to any student.

Teacher P2 (2nd grade) also engaged her students with positive reinforcement for misconduct, which as part of the general PBIS philosophy, reinforced good behavior. She followed a written schema for her second graders:

> Equitable responses are provided for all student groups in relationship to behavior, as a PBIS matrix … as well as the district's Code of Conduct. Students failing to meet appropriate behavior expectations receive verbal warnings and correction, parent contact is often made, and discipline referrals are used when necessary. Students [who] meet and exceed behavior expectations are rewarded positively…

Teacher P4 (5th grade) stated that she treated all fifth-grade students equitably; "My expectations are the same." Also, she pointed out that equitable treatment elevates every one of her students to "top-quality status."

Theme 4: Optimize Student Learning

Findings were used to determine four subthemes in response data of participants concerning how they perceive PBIS as facilitating and engaging students in learning: engaging activities, mobility, differentiation, and positive reinforcement. How the subthemes were determined and merged into themes is detailed below.

Engaging activities. Theme 4 emerged from several general pedagogic strategies participants shared about engaging students that did not reflect: Peer-Mediated Instruction, Teacher-Student Relationships, or Positive Reinforcement. For example, P7

(4th grade) gave her students time to write down questions and let them use hand signals to indicate agreement, disagreement, or misunderstanding. Teacher P7 said these simple activities were engaging because they involved students "actively in learning while listening and challenging them to inquire about the topic being taught." According to P7, this alleviated passivity of students." Teacher P11 (2nd grade) also engaged students with simple but engaging activities like response cards and choral reading (Appendix E). During the response card activity, all students are engaged by simultaneously holding up a colored index card to indicate their individual response to a question posed by the teacher during whole group instruction. Each colored card would represent an answer choice (i.e., blue = I agree, white = I do not agree, pink = I am not sure, yellow = I don't understand the question). During a choral response activity, all students in the class respond in unison to a teacher question. Both activities are used to engage students in learning and provide teacher monitoring of students' understanding.

Teacher P9 (1st grade) shared how she engaged students with interactions that contributed to optimizing student learning by, "trying to give all students opportunities to respond during instructional time, rather than just a select few like the high achievers." She commented that everyone participated, which helped create a whole-group ethos. Teacher P9 shared:

> After introducing a new concept, I will ask a student to explain what they heard me say to another student. Then the other student will tell me what they heard the other student say and compare it to what they understood me to say. Based on the responses…if either missed it, I will repeat the instructions.

Teacher P9 also commented that she encouraged her students to use response signals to let her know they were listening during teacher-directed instruction. She will stop and ask the class questions. She stated, "I will have students signal (head nod or thumbs up) at specific points" [during instruction] to indicate their answers. However, she added that she dialogues and sometimes debates with her first graders by prompting students with statements such as, "Do you agree? If no, why not? If yes, why?" Similarly, P6 (3rd grade) pointed out that teachers must provide students with opportunities to engage. She specified that such opportunities should consist of knowing cultural differences, clearly communicating teacher expectations, and providing feedback that they understand.

Given that the school is a 1-to-1 technology district (see Appendix E) and every student had access to computers, P11 (2nd grade) stated that she engaged students with polling computer programs such as Kahoot, Nearpod, GoGuardian, and Google Classroom (see Appendix E). These programs kept the students focused on learning, while allowing P11 to observe them during direct instruction. Teacher P11 declared, "These programs allow me to use collaborative platforms, monitor student engagement and performance, and provide feedback to students also." According to this response, the mentioned programs can be used to optimize student learning by facilitating instruction and engaging students in learning.

Mobility. The teachers engaged the students by staying mobile but used 'mobility' differently. Teacher P6 (3rd grade) shared how she used "every bit of the square footage" in her classroom rather than teaching in one spot. She gave direct instruction from the front, the back, or the side of the room, which enabled her to keep an

eye on student groups and their activities. "If I stand in just one spot 'on the stage,' I can't see and listen to what is going on in the classroom."

In contrast, P8 (4th grade) focused her proximity by positioning herself beside students who were not working. "If they haven't gotten started, I point to the book and ask them how should they get started?" Several teachers, in addition to P8 and P6, used mobility to engage the students. The mobility of teachers and their corresponding attentiveness reminded students their teachers were watching and available to help. Mobility served two functions: classroom management and offering assistance to students.

Differentiation. Differentiation is the technique of matching different pedagogic approaches to tailor scholastic experiences to student needs (Ismajli, & Imami-Morina, 2018). It is a powerful tool for optimizing student learning (Tomlinson, 2014). Differentiation was another dimension participants used to engage students in learning. One example was P2 (2nd grade) sharing how she scaffolded instruction for her students to build on previous knowledge. She used differentiation so that "students' individual needs for acceleration and enrichment" could be met. Teacher P2 instructed the whole class on what a community is. She then grouped students into fours and asked each group to discuss their communities. The whole group re-gathered and shared each group's list. This differentiation technique was used by P2 to accelerate (advance) students' comprehension by helping students to understand how communities are similar and different (skill: compare/contrast). It also enriched lesson content (Things that are in every community) beyond the textbook, when students discussed their own communities.

A second example of differentiated instruction was how P9 addressed prerequisite knowledge and skill levels using small group and center activities designed with individual student needs in mind. She set up information centers that provided background knowledge to be discussed by each student group. When the groups gathered as a whole class, P9 allowed a representative from each group to share three basic facts about the prerequisite information with the class. A third example was how P11 (2nd grade) augmented primary sources with videos, realistic fiction, and non-fiction stories.

Teacher P5 (5th grade) used differentiation instruction "to engage every type of learner." She declared:

> I like to use different methods with my lessons. I have all the different ways that I can to engage every type of learner: pictures, diagrams, videos, etc. I try to include all of these different types of methods, so that I can hopefully engage all of the students.

During instruction, P5 engaged learners by incorporating a power point presentation (PPP) with her lesson. The slides contained questions, but not the answers. She stated, following the PPP, "I ask them [students] the questions in class and they discuss and answer the questions."

Teacher P4 also stated that she used differentiated instruction to engage students in learning. She tailored lessons:

> I take into account that all students do not learn the same. I have at least three of the modalities in my lesson plan. I may start off with something on the board for the visual learner. Then I will start speaking about something [to] address the

needs of the auditory learner. Then I have some hands-on types of activities to address the needs of the kinesthetic learner.

Teacher P4 explained one way she differentiates instruction is by telling her students that they are "HOT" (Higher Order Thinkers). To challenge them, she will tell them: "Give me a Higher Order Thinker Response", to challenge their comprehension of content. She allow the students (with her guidance) to determine if the answer is a HOT response. Overall, participant responses to using differentiation indicated their intentions to optimize student learning by addressing student learning needs.

Positive reinforcement. The use of direct positive reinforcement with verbal praise and prizes are incentives for optimizing student learning. All participants admitted they regularly reinforced students through verbal praise and prizes. Teacher P2 engaged her second graders with verbal praise, School Bucks, stickers, or small treats when they behaved appropriately. She stated these incentives encourage students to stay on task during class time which increases the time they spend learning content. Teacher P3 also engaged her students with verbal praise, "That's what I'm talking about! I knew you could do it!" According to P3, verbal praise reinforces positive behavior, increases student cooperation, and builds confidence in the student's ability to learn. Teacher P11 (2^{nd} grade) also acknowledged providing positive behavior of students with verbal praise. She stated that she compliments them "before the whole class," but endorsed restraint…"I try not to go overboard, [being] sensitive to the fact that this may cause embarrassment to some students." Teacher P11 declared that verbal praise

"…encourages students to reduce negative behaviors and increase academic engagement."

Discussion of Findings

This study was designed to explore how teachers integrate PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The study was guided by two research questions: How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies to facilitate instruction? (RQ1); How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning? (RQ2). I analyzed interview responses and social studies lesson plans to clarify perceptions of teachers on integrating PBIS. Fifteen questions, aligned to RQ1 and RQ2 were used to guide the interviews (Appendices B & C), and seven of the interview questions were used to review lesson plans (Appendix D). Interview and lesson plan data were analyzed thematically to describe, evaluate, and condense data to provide answers to the research questions. The a priori coding strategy was applied to both data sets for the purpose of data reduction (Appendices G, H, & I).

Results of a priori coding indicated that all teachers integrated constructs of PBIS to facilitate instruction. The data revealed all teachers integrated PBIS with social studies instruction by using students as tutors and facilitators, allowing students to share classwork, giving positive reinforcement, demonstrating equitable treatment, and providing engaging activities, teacher mobility, and differentiated instruction. However, lesson plans did not provide strategies for integrating PBIS with social studies instruction. Findings, as aligned to research questions, are explained below.

RQ1: Integrating PBIS to Facilitate Instruction

Research question 1: How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with social studies to facilitate instruction? In addressing RQ1, findings from analysis of interview data indicated all teachers integrated constructs of PBIS: modeling, prompting, monitoring, and reinforcing instruction were used to facilitate instruction, however, details varied from interview responses and on lesson plans. How participants integrated constructs of PBIS with instruction to facilitate social studies instruction is discussed below.

Modeling. Interview data revealed that all teachers shared ways they implemented modeling to facilitate social studies instruction. Pertaining to the three approaches, data indicated participants introduced new topics by soliciting information about the students' existing knowledge with questions, anchor charts, scaffolding learning events, anticipation guides, real world connections, examples, creative thinking, and more. Teacher P1 used real world examples to make the new concept more relevant to student learning. Teacher P11 used a sensory-rich multidimensional technique to provide background for students. Teacher P2 (2^{nd} grade) incorporated a modeling technique similar to P11. She presented video clips and virtual fieldtrips to provide background and generate students' interest before introducing a new concept. Interview data indicated all teachers used relevancy strategies by giving students examples to apply creative thinking processes to lesson content. For example, P4 (5^{th} grade) presented her own 'I Have a Dream' speech as a model for a culminating activity after studying Martin

Luther King, Jr. Following her speech, she provided the students with the guidelines for writing their own 'I Have a Dream' speech.

Researchers have identified three evidenced-based practices to maximize student engagement: modeling academic and social behavior, offering students opportunities to be engaged (respond) during academic instruction time, and providing students with academic and behavioral feedback (Harbour et al., 2015). All teachers' modeling strategies addressed academic and behavioral problems by engaging students in learning. When the teachers used modeling, they asked relevant questions and provided student-teacher interactions. The teachers modeled expectations using auditory, visual, tactile, and kinesthetic instructional strategies, which addressed various learning styles of students. The objective of modeling aligns with Social learning theory (SLT). SLT supports that people learn new behaviors, attitudes, and values by observing others (Bandura, 1977). Modeling was used by the teachers to demonstrate to the students how to apply the concept, behave, think critically, and engage in learning.

Prompting. All teachers shared ways they prompted students during instruction: methods of prompting differed from grade to grade. During interviews, responses of all teachers described how they used PBIS to remind (prompt) students of learning and behavioral expectations. However, the lesson plans only listed processes for prompting. The teachers did not provide details of how the processes would be implemented and monitored in lesson plans. According to researcher, effective instructional strategies must be identified (Halladay & Moses, 2013; Peterson & Kaplan, 2013), inclusive of prompting strategies (Lane, Simonson, Myer, & DeLuca, 2010). Prompting is a

prevention strategy that is used to remind students of expectations for learning and behavior (Lane, Simonson, Myer, & DeLuca, 2010). Prompts consist of verbal, gestural, visual, and modeling strategies for informing students of learning or behavioral expectations (Morin, 2020). Verbal cues consist of stated rules or questions.

All teachers implemented direct verbal prompts by telling students exactly what they should do and used the standard question-and-answer strategy during instruction time. All teachers mentioned they used physical movements (gestures) to indicate what students were expected to do. For example, P1 directed students to submit daily work by pointing to the inbox and P7 walked around and touched students' desks if they were not doing their written assignment. All teachers mentioned they used visual prompting cues such as pictures, schedules, written instructions, and checklists. All teachers used modeling cues (noted in previous text) to demonstrate expectations for work products and expected behavior.

Monitoring. Effective use of monitoring will help teachers deliver, present learning materials, manage student behavior, and examine instructional practices, so disruptive behavior will be minimized and student learning opportunities will be maximized (Horner et al., 2015). Findings indicated all teachers reflected during interviews and indicated on lesson plans how they monitored student performance during instructional time, yet strategies varied from teacher to teacher. The teachers monitored student performance by asking questions, checking work during written assignments, providing immediate feedback, asking students to signify understanding (i.e. thumbs up), allowing students to ask questions, and so on. Yet the teachers indicated they were

constantly trying different monitoring strategies to facilitate social studies instruction. According to Reisman (2017), variance indicates inconsistent practices which may hinder the effective use of instructional strategies. However variance may be due to class dynamics, such as inclusion students, non-English speaking students, mixed abilities, and so on (Tomlinson, 2014). A solution given to address this issue is the planned use of engaging PBIS instructional methods (Chaparro et al., 2015) to address both academic and behavioral problems. The aim of implementing PBIS is to support the learning environment by "building the capability of teachers to embed the teaching and monitoring of social skills into the curriculum" (Yeung, et al., 2016, p. 147).

Reinforcing. The PBIS construct of reinforcing is based on operant conditioning theory (Horner et al., 2015), introduced by B. F. Skinner (1968). Reinforcement supports that a person's behavior can be changed by using reward and punishment (Skinner, 1968). Operant conditioning theory, also referred to as stimulus-response theory (S-R), is based on the idea that "learning is a function of change in overt behavior" (Culatta, 2020, p. 1). Findings for interviews indicated that all participants expressed how they reinforced learning and positive behavior by giving positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcers (stimulus) consisted of verbal praise, rewards, good grades, and encouragement from the teachers. According to Culatta (2020), the response to such a stimulus, "produces a consequence, such as defining a word, or solving math problems" (p. 1). The students' responses (consequences) were engagement in learning. According to researchers, the integration of correction strategies (i.e., constructs of PBIS) helps to

prevent or reduce negative behaviors that interrupt the learning environment and impede learning (Ennis, Royer, Lane, & Griffin, 2017).

All participants acknowledged they used verbal praise and prizes as incentives for maximizing student learning. The incentives were used to reduce negative student behavior and increase positive behavior and engagement in learning. The participants affirmed that the reduction of negative behaviors increased student engagement in learning. According to Horner (2015), effective reinforcement helps teachers manage student behavior so disruptive behavior will be minimized and student learning opportunities will be maximized. When student engagement is improved, the learning environment and student learning will improve (Regional Education & Outreach Center for Research, 2015).

The U.S. Department of Education (2014) determined three key principles vital to creating productive learning environments: be proactive—develop positive and respectful school climates; be fair—make clear and appropriate expectations and consequences; and be scientifically based—use data to guarantee fairness and equity for all students. These principles are key also to reinforcing instruction and engaging students in learning. Teachers play a major role in reinforcing student learning through lesson development, instructional presentations, and providing a positive learning environment (Allen et al., 2013). All teachers affirmed they had productive learning environments. The teachers indicated that they were proactive, treated students fairly, and used positive reinforcements to engage students in learning.

RQ2: Teacher Perceptions of PBIS

The second research question asked: How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning? In addressing RQ2, information on teachers' perceptions of PBIS as facilitating and engaging students in learning, was obtained from interview responses. Based on findings from interviews, all teachers responded affirmatively they perceived PBIS as facilitating and engaging students in learning. During thematic analysis of interview data, four themes emerged: Peer-Mediated Instruction (Theme 1); Teacher-Student Relationships (Theme 2); Reinforce Appropriate Behavior (Theme 3); and Optimize Student Learning (Theme 4).

Theme 1: Peer-mediated instruction. The teachers engaged students in the transfer of content by integrating PBIS instructional strategies entailing peer-mediated instruction. Findings showed all teachers believed they engaged students by devoting classroom time to activities that engendered collaborative interactions between students. The teachers shared how much they depended on students to share knowledge with each other. The emphasis they placed on peer mediated instruction was that this process helped students build reliance on each other. They also asserted that peer-mediation helped student develop cooperation skills.

Teachers described how they engaged students in peer-mediated instruction. The strategies they used of peer mediation consisted of cooperative learning, collaboration, peer-tutoring, problem-centered instruction, conflict resolution, students sharing work, and peer-teaching. Teachers P12 and P4 created teams of students who completed

assignments using peer-mediated instruction. Teacher P12 put her students in groups of 3 and used peer-mediated instruction. Teacher P4 paired students and used peer-tutoring to assist struggling students. Teacher P11 mentioned peer-mediated instruction increased opportunities for students to respond and provided social learning opportunities for students. Teacher P11 affirmed that opportunities to engage in peer-mediated instruction promoted the development of appropriate communication skills in students.

Theme 2: Teacher-student relationships. All teachers perceived they developed teacher-student relationships to facilitate and engage students in learning. They developed professional relationships with each of their students to win their trust and solicit student cooperation in learning. All teachers made comments about the merits of establishing appropriately affectionate and respectful relationships with their students. Teacher P8 (4th grade) shared how she wanted her students to feel supported and encouraged to be successful. Teachers P12 (3rd grade) and P5 (5th grade) expressed the importance of building appropriate teacher-student relations and encouraged student success. Teachers P6 (3rd grade), P8 (4th grade), P3 (4th) affirmed the significance of building relationship with students to manage student behavior. All teachers emphasized reasons for establishing positive teacher-student relationships maximizing student success and minimizing student misbehavior.

Theme 3: Reinforce appropriate behavior. All teachers believed they positively reinforced appropriate student behavior. They used positive reinforcements to support appropriate behavior. Positive reinforcement should be used to engage students in learning, avoid disruptions, and reduce loss of instructional time (OSEP Technical

Assistance Center, 2019). Findings indicated teachers placed emphasis on using positive reinforcement to help students recognize and practice expected behavior and to provide equitable treatment of misconduct. Teachers reinforced expected behaviors using discipline charts, checklists, school bucks, and more to encourage positive behavior and engage students in learning. Teachers used positive disciplinary feedback to engage student, even when handling misconduct. Teacher P11 (2nd grade) provided immediate feedback focused on addressing a student's specific behavioral need and tried to handle each case using the same steps (equitable treatment). Teacher P8 (4th grade) sought to manage student misconduct fairly by handling misconduct equitably. She emphasized addressing the misconduct by purposefully building a supportive relationship with the student to understand and address the need. One teacher (P9) redirected behavior to engage students into appropriate behavior. All teachers aimed at soliciting student cooperation by using positive reinforcement strategies and equitable responses.

Theme 4: Optimize student learning. All teachers believed they optimized student learning by using engaging activities, teacher mobility, differentiation, and positive reinforcement. Engaging activities alleviated passivity, challenged students, and provided ways for teachers to monitor student engagement instantly. All teachers shared how they were mobile throughout class time. Their mobility enabled them to monitor students, encourage engagement, provide classroom management and student assistance. Differentiation was used by all teachers to engage every type of learner (mixed-abilities). Teachers emphasized how they used visual, audio, tactile, and kinesthetic instructional

methods to address various learning styles of students. All teachers used praise and prizes to reinforce student learning.

Based on verbal responses, all teachers expressed their belief that the use of PBIS helps to facilitate and engage students in learning. It is not enough that teachers believed PBIS help student learning, but for PBIS to be effectively integrated with instruction, evidenced-based intervention practices have to be planned (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012), as well as practiced (Sugai & Horner, 2006). The PBIS framework should be integrated with planned instruction to support student behavior, student social competence, decision making, and academic achievement (Sugai & Horner, 2006). The PBIS framework should be integrated with planned instruction to: support student behavior, student social competence, decision making, and academic achievement (Sugai & Horner).

Lesson planning provides a step-by-step guide that supports control of the lesson and the teaching environment (Education &Training, 2018). Planning lessons that introduce, model, and reinforce positive social behavior (i.e., PBIS) is an important step to help teachers focus on teaching students positive social behaviors (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). This factor is referred to as one of the three core features of the effective integration of behavioral supports and academic instruction. The other two features entail:

1. Addressing emotional, behavioral, and social content within academic instruction; and

2. Utilizing differentiated instruction and supports matched to student learning needs by considering academics, emotional, behavioral, and social needs. (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019)

To effectively facilitate instruction and engage students in learning, teachers must purposefully plan integration of PBIS. However, findings indicated planning for integrating PBIS with social studies was not shown on lesson plans. The lack of planning may be due to insufficient knowledge, training, or resources (McNeill et al., 2016; Ratcliff et al., 2014; Tebukooza, 2015) on utilizing PBIS with instruction. The PBIS framework as an approach to integrating four elements: data, practice, systems, and outcomes to guide implementation, producing a school environment that supports social and academic success for all students (Graham et al., 2016). The PBIS framework involves the use of evidenced-based intervention practices and organizational systems to accomplish positive academic and social outcomes for students (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

Morris et al. (2016) found that lack of knowledge about how to use new implementations may be due to limited training and needed professional development. According to Darling-Hammond (2015), until effective use of instructional methods has been determined, effective instructional strategies cannot be identified. According to Garland (2017), when effective instructional strategies are identified, planned, and used by teachers, students are enabled to meet learning objectives.

Based on the lesson plan review findings, I concluded the SSES teachers need to understand how to plan appropriate applications of PBIS on lesson plans. Researchers

support planning appropriate instructional applications as necessary for purposeful planning (Ficarra & Quinn, 2014; Hayes & Gershenson, 2015). Lacking knowledge in planning appropriate instructional strategies contributes to a practice gap. Findings from this study can be used to address this gap by providing research-based data that teachers can utilize for planning and writing lesson plans to: implement PBIS with social studies, facilitate instruction, and engage students in learning.

Discrepant Cases

I found no discrepant cases during the analysis of data. Discrepant cases would consist of data that varies from identified patterns or themes (Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 2009). Discrepant cases, also referred to as 'negative cases,' indicate "respondents' experiences or viewpoints differ from the body of evidence (Hsiung, 2010, p. 1). In my analysis of interview data, findings indicated that all teachers understood how to integrate constructs of PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to explore how teachers integrate PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Teachers' perspectives at SSES were varied relative to how they integrated PBIS with social studies. They shared their use of various instructional methods of integrating constructs of PBIS with instruction to engage students in learning. PBIS instructional strategies that provide more personalized interdependence for developing positive student behavior were not indicated on teachers' lesson plans. Lesson plan findings indicated teachers did not detail plans for integrating

PBIS. In this research study, I found two factors common to implementing each construct of PBIS at SSES: 1) teachers using different teaching strategies to utilize constructs and 2) teachers not planning how to use constructs on lesson plans. I identified four possible reasons that may contribute to these factors: limited resources and/or knowledge of effective PBIS instructional strategies (Meador, 2017), need to identify effective instructional strategies for integrating PBIS with social studies (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015; Meador, 2017; Rivkin & Schiman, 2015; Swain-Bradway et al., 2013), insufficient planning instruction (McNeill et al., 2016; Ratcliff et al., 2014; Tebukooza, 2015; Werts, Carpenter, & Fewell, 2014) to integrate PBIS; and needed teacher collaboration for implementing PBIS (Carreño &Hernandez Ortiz, 2017; Ficarra & Quinn, 2014; Hayes & Gershenson, 2015: McIntosh & Goodman, 2016; McCurdy et al., 2016; Patterson et al., 2018; Sun et al., 2016).

I chose a white paper project (Appendix A) as an outcome of this study. A white paper is a document that is used to describe a specific problem and present a proposal for a research-based solution (Graham, 2019; Willerton, 2013). The findings indicated the need to extend instruction planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. I chose a white paper because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school (Hirsh, Killion, & Pollard, 2015). According to researchers, PBIS training should be ongoing, sustained, and long term (Sugai & Horner, 2014).

Summary

In this section, processes for conducting interviews and review of lesson plans were detailed as qualitative approaches to answering the research questions. An explanation detailing the analysis of data was presented. The findings provided information about the experiences and teachers' perceptions about Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning. The findings were used to develop a white paper project. In section 3, I describe the white paper and present a proposed action plan for developing ongoing teacher collaboration at SSES.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

This qualitative descriptive case study was conducted to explore how teachers integrate PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. I conducted one-on-one interviews and reviewed lesson plans to collect data for this research. From the findings, I determined that all teachers integrated the four constructs of PBIS (RQ1) with social studies instruction and positively affirmed that they perceived PBIS as facilitating and engaging students in learning (RQ2). However, findings from the review of lesson plans did not align with the findings from the interview responses of teachers. Lesson plan findings indicated that the teachers did not detail plans for integrating PBIS, yet the teachers shared details of how they integrated PBIS with social studies instruction during interviews. I chose a white paper project (Appendix A) as an outcome of this study, based on subthemes and themes that emerged from data analysis. The white paper will be used to provide data from the study and present an action plan for taking a collaborative team approach to implementing PBIS. This section details the following components of the white paper project: rationale, supporting literature, description, goals, evaluation plan, implementation methods, study barriers, and implications for social change.

Rationale

I chose a white paper (Appendix A) as the project genre for this research study. A white paper is a practical, action-driven approach, supported by research, to providing a solution to a problem (Malone & Wright, 2017). Teachers at SSES were trained by their

PBIS team to implement PBIS. However, they were permitted to integrate PBIS using their preferred methods of instruction. The SSES school district mandated implementation of PBIS, but specific instructional methods were not required. As a result, the principal did not know how teachers integrate PBIS with academics. This problem contributed to a gap in practice. This study was conducted to address that problem. The findings indicated the need to extend instructional planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. Initially, I considered designing PD for teachers at SSES; however a white paper was an appropriate project for my study. Because the PBIS PD needs to be ongoing, sustained, and long term (Sugai & Horner, 2014), a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school (Hirsh, Killion, & Pollard, 2015).

A white paper is the best method for presenting the study findings to inform the principal at SSES on how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies. The white paper will be used to inform the principal of the significance of using teachers' perspectives when implementing or integrating new instructional processes. According to Werts, Carpenter, and Fewell (2014), teachers' perspectives should be used to determine if they lack specific knowledge of steps in implementing instructional processes. The findings, presented in the white paper, can be used to help the principal understand what the teachers may lack in implementing PBIS instructional processes (Werts et al., 2014).

A white paper should be used by its writer to promote certain viewpoints (Graham, 2019; Sakamuro, Stolley, & Hyde, 2015). Based on related research and analysis findings, I developed alternative viewpoints about potential factors that

contributed to the problem and a potential solution to the problem. I used the white paper as a means to persuade the principal about my viewpoints and present a solution for solving the problem (Ewald, 2016). In the white paper, information is included to help the principal clarify the issue and plan solutions to resolve the problem (Malone & Wright, 2017). In the white paper, I combined my research findings with current research to develop a research-based action plan. The white paper will be presented to the principal to share the study findings, present related research, and propose an action plan as a solution for addressing the problem (Hayes, 2019).

Review of the Literature

I conducted a review of literature that supported recommendations for and development of a white paper project to present to the principal of SSES. The review of literature details the purpose, content, and format of the white paper. A discussion of related literature is presented as aligned to an analysis of study findings. Based on findings from this study, I determined a need for using perceptions of teachers on integrating PBIS with instruction as foundations for determining needed professional development and necessary components of teacher collaboration for purposeful lesson planning. I conducted a broad search, using electronic archives of Walden University Library. I searched for primary and peer-reviewed research conducted within the last 5 years. I searched using the following databases: Thoreau, EBSCOhost, Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and Academic Search Complete. Additionally, I conducted searches on Internet databases (i.e., Google Scholar). My review of literature was based on the following search terms: *white paper, professional development, active*

professional development, meeting professional development needs of teachers, active participation in professional development, collaboration, collaborative team approach, benefits of teacher collaboration, and approaches to teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS. I used the literature to address and validate my recommendations to: provide professional development on teacher collaboration focused on integrating PBIS with academics, and permit teachers to take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction.

White Paper

Purpose. A white paper is a document that is used to describe a given problem and present a proposal for a specific solution (Graham, 2019). It is an in-depth report to help readers understand an issue and influence their decision-making process (Hayes, 2019). The goal of a white paper is to advocate a particular position as the best solution for a specific problem (Sakamuro et al., 2015). The first white paper, created by Winston Churchill in 1922, was written to promote a governmental policy, in response to political conflicts in Palestine (Malone & Wright, 2017). Initially, white papers were written as reports to discuss the implications of decisions and promote pragmatic approaches to positive social change (Malone & Wright, 2017). Malone and Wright (2017) described the white paper's evolution as moving from the promotion of governmental policy, to marketing for businesses, to data-driven decision making for addressing issues within organizations, inclusive of education.

Pershing (2015) supported the white paper as an useful tool for improving performance because it provides knowledge that can help the reader better understand

how to apply a solution to a problem. A white paper can function as the framework for organizational position papers inclusive of research-based recommendations for making improvements in an organization (Campbell & Naidoo, 2016). The white paper created for this study provides the background of the problem and a research-based action plan for improving how teachers integrate PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning.

Format and content. In composing a white paper, an author has three important considerations: audience, expertise, and a problem-based, solution-focused approach (Pershing, 2015). First, the author must consider the target audience before writing the white paper. The target audience for my white paper is the principal and teachers at SSES. Second, the white paper must provide an investigation inclusive of internal and external research. References, based on data, should be included in the white paper to verify the benefits and effectiveness of the product or service (Malone & Wright, 2017). The topic must be broadly researched and supported by significant research (Pershing, 2015). For my white paper, I conducted internal research at SSES to provide data for this study and external research by reviewing current studies that aligned with my study. Finally, a white paper should identify a problem and provide a proposed solution.

According to Malone and Wright (2017), a problem and a solution should be identified in the context of a white paper. The problem should involve an issue that needs to be addressed. The solution should present a product or service that provides information to persuade and educate the reader to take the recommended action(s) to solve the problem. The white paper for this study addresses the problem of not knowing

how teachers at SSES integrate PBIS with social studies. In the white paper, I propose a two phase action plan for solving the problem:

1. Provide on-going professional development training on teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS with academics; and
2. Allow teachers to take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction.

I explain how the action plan supports research-based strategies for improving the integration of PBIS with instruction. The white paper concludes by summarizing how the action plan would present a solution to the problem of not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with academic instruction, thereby helping teachers fill a practice gap.

On-going Professional Development Training

The first phase of my action plan is on-going professional development (PD) training on teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS with academics to address the needs of teachers at SSES. After investigating perceptions of teachers on how they integrated PBIS with social studies, I determined that the teachers needed PD training to address their inconsistent applications of PBIS. According to Rivkin and Schiman (2015), addressing the use of instructional methods is necessary for determining the instructional support needed to affect student learning positively. PD can provide teachers with activities to enhance knowledge, instruction, accountability, skills, technology, and communication (Filipe, Silva, Stulting, & Golnik, 2014). However, best practices for PD training need to be examined to provide teachers with adequate resources to promote learning and consistent instructional practices (Hirsh et al., 2015).

De Neve, Devos, and Tuytens (2015) investigated the relationship between professional learning and personal resources for implementing differentiated instruction in 65 primary schools (227 teachers). The researchers provided empirical evidence to indicate why beginning teachers need to receive professional learning before implementing new instructional strategies. According to De Neve et al. (2015), on-going PD helps teachers better understand how to implement intervention processes, thereby having a positive effect on instructional practices. By engaging in on-going PD training, teachers at the study school can learn how to plan lessons to integrate PBIS with instruction successfully.

In a qualitative study, Castillo, March, Tan, Stockslager, and Brundage (2016) investigated educators from 12 school districts (34 schools) to determine relations between PD training focused on response to intervention (RTI) and educators' beliefs about RTI implementation. PD focused on RTI processes resulted in positive changes in educators making data-based decisions when implementing RTI. Castillo et al. (2016) affirmed that PD training should address individual school needs, as needs may vary from school to school. Additionally, PD activities should address the professional learning needs of individual classrooms and educators (Castillo et al., 2016).

Castillo et al. (2016) further supported identifying needed skills as a critical component of planning PD training on implementations. When PD training targets instructional needs, teachers will be more successful in their practices. However, the success of PD depends on teachers and administrators collaborating on needed improvements in instructional practices (Castillo et al., 2016). The researchers affirmed

that no method of PD was found to be better than another and proposed questions about how to focus, design, and deliver PD for RTI training. Conversely, Castillo et al. (2016) affirmed that PD training is directly dependent upon the degree of support provided to educators by school and district leaders.

Werts et al. (2014) conducted a qualitative study investigating perceptions of 203 elementary teachers on the benefits and barriers of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. The perceived benefits of using RTI processes with their students were identification of student behavioral and academic needs increased student learning, and fewer student referrals. Perceived benefits for teachers were increasing PD, collaboration, differentiated instruction, and accountability. Perceived barriers to using RTI processes were lack of training, knowledge, teacher buy-in, administrative support, and collaboration.

I noted that collaboration was perceived by teachers as a benefit and as a barrier. According to the researchers, determining effective PD depends on teachers collaborating about what is needed to improve instructional practices (Werts et al., 2014). These barriers, as they related to collaboration and lack of training, aligned with my study findings. I determined that teachers needed PD training to learn how to collaborate on lesson planning and take a collaborative approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction.

Findings from both Castillo et al. (2016) and Werts et al. (2014) applied to my study as processes of RTI and PBIS are based on differentiated instruction. According to researchers, the differing learning needs of students require teachers to adjust instruction

to address the specific learning styles of students (Morgan, 2014; Tobin & Tippett, 2014; Valiandes, 2015). According to Morgan (2014), the use of differential instruction can address the learning needs of both high and lower level students. Differentiated instruction is used by teachers to maximize student learning by helping students strive to achieve more (Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, & Hardin, 2014; Morgan, 2014).

Both RTI and PBIS approaches have three components: universal (Tier 1), target group (Tier 2), and individual (Tier 3) levels of intervention (Roden, 2015). Werts et al. (2014) affirmed that when teachers lack specific knowledge in implementing an intervention, it may be due to the lack of training on how to properly use the intervention. Findings from my study indicated that SSES teachers lacked planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction on lesson plans. Through ongoing PD training, SSES teachers can learn strategies for effectively planning lessons for developing appropriate behavior to engage students in learning.

Effective professional development. Whitworth and Chiu (2015) conducted a review of literature on designing PD for improving science education. The researchers found several factors that determine the effectiveness of PD: working conditions, teacher experience, school culture, self-efficacy, and teacher motivation. Additionally, the researchers determined that a critical role of district and school leaders is supporting the development of needed PD to facilitate changes in instructional practices. When teachers participate in effective PD, teachers' instructional practices are improved, and student learning and achievement increase.

Effective PD has been a central concern in education in recent decades (Bayar, 2014). In a qualitative study, Bayar sought to understand perspectives of teachers on effective PD. Bayar found that teachers consider PD effective if based on their needs and provided continuously to address the needs. Bayar also found that teachers considered opportunities for active participation to be a component of effective PD. The majority of teachers (12 out of 16) expressed dissatisfaction about being forced to sit and listen to facilitators, not being allowed to participate during PD training, and not having input in PD training conducted at their school. The teachers expressed that their lack of learning of effective teaching strategies was due to not being engaged during PD training.

Bayar (2014) affirmed that for PD training to be practical, it must address teachers' perspectives on their PD needs, actively engage participants, meet school needs, involve teachers in planning PD activities, and provide quality instructors. These factors informed the first phase to provide PD training on teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS with academics. With these needs addressed through effective PD, teachers will learn how to plan and practice PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning.

Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) reviewed 35 research studies on PD that has been proven effective in improving teacher practices and student learning. The researchers concluded that effective PD incorporates adult learning theory (e.g., active learning), is content focused, involves collaboration, uses effective practices, presents opportunities for reflection and feedback, and provides coaching and support (p. 4). These features align with the principles of adult learning as determined by Knowles

(1980). According to Knowles, when preparing PD for adults, designers of the training should consider the following factors:

1. Adult learners have a need to be self-directing;
2. Readiness for learning increases when there is a specific need to know;
3. Life's reservoir of experience is a primary learning resource;
4. Life experiences of others add enrichment to the learning process; and
5. Adult learners have an inherent need for immediacy of applications. (pp. 63-66)

Considering these principles, the following components were identified: the significance of teachers being involved in planning instruction, teachers performing better when PD focuses on actual performance, teachers attaching more meaning to experiences (rather than knowledge acquired through passive learning), and teachers showing more interest in learning when PD is relevant to their jobs. The significance of providing teachers with opportunities to actively participate during PD training is based on these factors.

In my study, I explored teachers' perceptions on how they integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Findings of reported instructional practices were so varied that I wondered if the teachers were actively engaged in demonstrating the use of PBIS. After reviewing the previously shared studies and considering the findings, I determined the importance of providing teachers opportunities for active learning during PD training. Teachers can acquire critical skill training through active participation during PD. According to Berne,

Degener, Hoch, and Manderino (2014), administrators need to provide job-embedded PD. Through actual applications of research-based teaching strategies during PD training, teachers can obtain practical experiences to help them address and meet the academic needs of students with more confidence.

In a quantitative study of 209 teachers (5^{th} grade), Donnell and Gettinger (2015), found three components that promoted positive attitudes of teachers toward implementing RTI: self-efficacy, teacher beliefs, and professional development. However, the researchers affirmed during PD training on RTI implementations, teachers should engage in making decisions about components of implementations. In addition to allowing participants active participation opportunities during PD activities, Bayer indicated components of effective PD consist of matching needs of teachers, matching school needs, involving teachers in planning or designing PD activities, and providing quality instructors.

In a review of literature on PD, Whitworth and Chiu (2015) searched factors for designing effective PD for science instruction. The researchers identified the following contextual factors to consider while designing PD for teachers: motivation, experience, school culture, and working conditions. Additionally, Whitworth and Chiu (2015) identified district and school science leaders as a major component missing from PD planning and implementation. Whitworth and Chiu's research aligned with findings of Werts et al. (2014), which indicated the need for administrative support in helping to meet implementation needs. Findings in my study indicated the need to incorporate

administrative support for planning effective PD to address implementation of PBIS at the study school.

Collaborative Team Approach

The second phase of my action plan is for teachers to take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction. A collaborative team approach will permit teachers opportunities to be actively involved in the planning processes of PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Teachers will collaborate plans for implementing best practices and strategies for integrating PBIS using their knowledge and proven experiences. Teachers and other instructional support staff are a significant part of planning best practices for implementing a school wide prevention system (i.e., PBIS).

After analyzing American "expanded time schools," Davis (2015), found a positive correlation between improved student learning and teacher collaboration. Davis, president of the National Center of Time and Learning, declared, "As teachers work together to strengthen their teaching skills, they also can augment instructional practice dramatically, and thus make their time with students even more valuable" (p. 26). By using a collaborative team approach to planning processes of implementation, teachers will be more willing to implement PBIS (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015). According to Hannigan and Hauser (2015), during teacher collaboration, components of effective implementation can be identified. Voogt, Laferriere, Breuleux, Itow, Hickey, and McKenney (2015) investigated how teachers learn by researching studies on collaboration as a form of professional development. Voogt et al. concluded that through

collaboration, teachers are provided with opportunities "to reflect on the intentions and implications of reform" (p. 260). According to Voogt et al., while actively being engaged in curriculum planning, teachers are more willing to learn from each other as they share professional knowledge, instructional practices, and learning goals for students. The researchers determined that the use of a collaborative design provides teachers with personal learning, team learning, and system learning.

Benefits of effective collaboration. Several studies have been conducted during the past three decades, supporting the positive impacts of teacher collaborative team approaches. Recent research studies have indicated that teacher collaboration improves instructional practices and student achievement. Using a quasi-experimental design, Goddard, Goddard, Sook and Miller (2015) tested theoretical linkages of principal leadership, collective efficacy beliefs of teachers, teacher collaboration, and student achievement. The researchers determined:

1. The extent of teacher collaboration to improve instruction depends on the instructional leadership of the principal;
2. The instructional leadership of the principal significantly predicts collective efficacy beliefs of teachers and influences collaboration; and
3. Collective efficacy, as perceived by teachers, is a positive predictor of student achievement.

The findings supported social cognitive theory by indicating when a principal promotes collaboration to improve instruction, the efficacy beliefs of teachers will be improved,

resulting in improved student achievement. This study supports the significance of my action plan.

Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen and Grissom (2015) supported that effective teacher collaboration positively influences teacher performance and student learning. The researchers conducted a quantitative study for 2 years by investigating collaboration practices of 9,000 teachers in the Miami Dade County Public School System (MDCPS). The MDCPS is the fourth largest school system in the U.S.A. Approximately 90% of the teachers (336 schools) reported collaborative teams helped them to improve instructional practices. Findings from the assessment of collaboration were statistically similar in elementary and secondary schools. However, teachers at schools with larger enrollments reported better quality collaboration. Schools where teachers engaged in effective collaboration had statistically higher gains in mathematics and reading achievement scores. The researchers determined that more significant improvements in instructional practices and student achievement occurred at schools with better teacher collaboration.

Sun, Loeb, and Grissom (2016) collected 10 years of data from MDCPS for school years 2003-2013 to investigate mathematics teachers, Grades 3-8, who had transferred between schools. The researchers determined the influence of more effective transferring teachers on instruction of less effective incumbent teachers and student achievement. Differences in organizational structures of elementary and middle-grade schools influence peer formation as well as collaboration. However, the researchers found consistent evidence that the positive influence the effective teachers had on the less effective teachers resulted in improved academic performance of students of the less

effective teachers. This concept is referred to as a "positive spillover" and is significant because strategic groupings of teachers can be used to increase student learning. This concept aligns with teacher collaboration, which comes in various forms; however, it should be focused on incorporating teachers' experiences to create improvements in instruction and student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2015).

Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, and Kyndt (2015) conducted an overview of 82 literature sources on teacher collaboration. From the study, the researchers affirmed that the benefits of teacher collaboration ranged from improved teacher instruction to student learning. Teachers benefit most from collaboration as related to better job performance, increased motivation, enhanced morale, and more support from colleagues and administrators. Students tend to improve academic progress when teachers collaborate. Vangrieken et al. also affirmed that the entire school benefits when teachers collaborate. As academic performances of students increase, schools undergo innovative cultural changes. According to Patterson, Weaver, Fletcher, Connor, Thomas, and Ross (2018), teacher collaboration increased students' interest in social studies and integrated content. The researchers reported that teachers determined collaborating plans for lessons strengthened content as well as civic literacy of students as related to motivation, depth of knowledge, and cross-curricular connections.

Carreño and Hernandez Ortiz (2017) found in a qualitative case study that teacher collaboration ensures research-based standards of instruction are used to enhance student learning. The researchers interviewed five teachers and five mentors to explore their perceptions of a co-planning (collaboration) program (English proficiency) and teacher

mentoring, implemented for 3 years. Co-planning provided teachers access to activities and resources that made their classes more exciting and motivating due to the integration of different perspectives in planning. According to Carreño and Hernandez Ortiz, teacher mentoring is key to the success of co-planning because through this process, teachers are made to feel more empowered. Also, co-planning and mentoring are practical and efficient methods for lesson planning. Teachers seek and receive advice more willingly from other teachers than from other sources or outside specialist (Sun et al., 2016).

Collaboration can help teachers at SSES learn to plan and document research-based strategies for implementing PBIS on lesson plans. Also, planned applications of PBIS can be viewed on lesson plans and recognized during instructional (observation) time by the administrator. This information can be used by the teachers and administrators to verify how PBIS was planned and implemented with social studies instruction to engage students in learning. When effective usage of instructional strategies has been determined, practical instructional strategies will be identified (McIntosh & Goodman, 2016). McIntosh and Goodman (2016) affirmed the effective integration of PBIS involves deliberate alignment with processes that effect improved academic and behavioral outcomes. By collaborating, teachers at SSES can share elements of quality instruction for both academic and behavioral practices to strategically planning integration of PBIS to facilitate social studies lessons and engage students in learning.

Challenges of teacher collaboration. Collaboration is a challenge for most schools (Global State of Digital Learning Study, 2019). According to the Global State of

Digital Learning Study, of 89 countries (2,846 educators), over 30% of teachers and almost 50% of administrators consider collaboration a top priority. However, 30% of those administrators reported that their biggest challenge is getting teachers to implement the collaboration process. The following factors, according to the administrators, verify why teacher collaboration is a challenge: lack of teacher commitment, personality conflicts, and limited time for planning, collaborating, and reflecting.

Yuan and Zhang (2016) investigated teacher collaboration in Chinese schools, a process referred to as joint lesson planning. The researchers concluded that teacher collaboration is a developmental process that incorporates various challenges, such as lack of structure, homogeneity of teachers, and superficial collaboration. According to Patterson et al. (2018), a challenge faced by teachers is finding commonalties between disciplines and sources that will help connect the content areas. Locating and incorporating sources are considered barriers to effective teacher collaboration (Patterson et al.). Yuan and Zhang noted that a gap between teachers and school administrators may attribute to the failure of teacher collaboration. The researchers affirmed barriers to teacher collaboration as "insufficient collaborative time, ineffective school leadership, unfavorable accountability policy, and lack of collaborative professional culture" (p. 219).

Yuan and Zhang affirmed the development of teacher collaboration is not dependent upon teachers, but requires support from other stakeholders such as school leaders. The researchers sustained that teachers will become more actively engaged in collaboration when supported by school leaders. With such support, teachers will be

more willing to share their pedagogical experiences during lesson planning which will help other teachers feel more supported, when otherwise planning independently (Yuan & Zhang). According to Ronfeldt et al. (2015), for meaningful teacher collaboration to occur, school leaders must provide support and needed resources. Structures, routines, as well as protocols to facilitate teacher interactions must be implemented to focus effectively on instructional concerns (Ronfeldt et al.). This factor aligned with findings from studies conducted by Whitworth and Chiu (2015) and Werts et al., (2014), which indicated the significance of needed support from educational leaders and school districts to provide PD (resources) to meet instructional needs of teachers.

Collaborate plans for integrating PBIS. Planning lessons for developing appropriate behavior is a significant component of PBIS implementation (OSEP National Technical Assistance Center, 2019). Effective integration of PBIS with academic instruction permits teachers to support both the behavioral and academic competence of students (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). While developers of the PBIS framework do not endorse any specific instructional approach (Horner, Sugai, &Lewis, 2015), they support teachers using evidence-based practices (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). According to Horner et al., when implementing PBIS, a research-based instructional approach should be used so students will be provided with a range of opportunities to be academically successful, while focusing on their social, emotional, and behavioral needs.

According to McCurdy, Thomas, Truckenmiller, Rich, Hillis, and Lopez (2016), staff and teacher commitment, as well as collaboration are critical to the effectiveness of

PBIS. After investigating the impact of School-wide PBIS on students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBDs), the researchers affirmed the success of PBIS requires taking a collaborative approach to implementation. McCurdy et al. concluded that the approach to implementation consists of: focusing on school-wide planning of academic and behavioral expectations; differentiating instruction; and teaching social skills to improve student behavioral and academic achievement.

In my study, findings indicated that SSES teachers need to understand how to plan appropriate applications of PBIS on lesson plans. By collaborating, the teachers can support each other in planning appropriate instructional applications of PBIS (Ficarra & Quinn, 2014; Hayes & Gershenson, 2015). Individually, teachers may lack knowledge in planning specific instructional strategies of PBIS, but collectively they can benefit from each other by sharing their instruction and practice successes. As varied as their perspectives were on how they integrated PBIS with social studies, a collaborative team approach to writing lesson plans can help the teachers build and strengthen their practices. With this collaborative approach, the principal would understand how teachers integrate PBIS with academics because evidence of implementation would be on lesson plans as well as displayed in instructional practices.

Academic instructional plans should indicate how PBIS is integrated to support the behavioral competence of students to verify how this process is being implemented (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). By taking a collaborative team approach to lesson planning, teachers can address the integration of PBIS. Effective integration of academic and behavioral supports should consist of emotional, social, and behavioral

content within academic instruction. Effective integration should utilize differentiated instruction, matched to students' academic, emotional, social, and behavioral needs (OSEP Technical Assistance Center). By taking a collaborative team approach, SSES teachers can purposefully plan lessons to include these components.

According to researchers, the integration of purposefully planned correction techniques (i.e., PBIS) will help to prevent negative behaviors that may interfere with learning (Ennis, Royer, Lane, & Griffin, 2017). By using a collaborative team approach to lesson planning, integrating PBIS with academics can be addressed more thoroughly at SSES. However, for the collaborative approach to be practical, teachers must focus on identifying effective instructional strategies for integrating PBIS with social studies (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015; Meador, 2017; Rivkin & Schiman, 2015; Swain-Bradway, Swoszowski, Boden, & Sprague, 2013).

Project Description

The project for this study, a white paper, was developed after I explored how teachers at a rural Title I elementary school in a southern state (pseudonym: SSES) integrated PBIS with social studies. I chose a white paper project because the findings indicated the need to extend instruction planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. I determined a white paper as the appropriate project because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school. My plan for the white paper project is to present an action plan for improving PBIS implementation at the study school. The white paper be presented to the principal to address the stated problem. The principal is to

share the white paper with other administrators and teachers at SSES. The white paper introduces the study school as a Title I school, where PBIS implementation, mandated by the study school district, is a school improvement effort. In the white paper, I explain the action plan, phases for implementing the action plan, and roles of teachers. The problem associated with implementing PBIS at SSES is explained as the school principal not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning, An investigation of this problem helped me to determine: how the goals for PBIS implementation to reduce loss of instructional time and disruptive student behavior are being met and if teachers understand how to effectively integrate PBIS to promote delivery of academic instruction and positive student behavior.

The white paper provides analysis of data, by explaining how teachers used constructs of PBIS and how four themes emerged from interview and review of lesson plan findings. The themes that emerged were: Peer Mediated Instruction; Teacher Student Relationships; Positive Reinforcement; and Optimize Student Learning. Based on the themes and related research, I developed an action plan for designing professional development training on teacher collaboration and taking a collaborative team approach (CTA) to PBIS implementation. Details of the CTA are related to approaches to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction. This action plan could benefit all teachers at the school by helping them improve the planning of instruction, which could decrease the loss of instructional time and increase opportunities for student learning.

In addition to the action plan, I determined three goals for the white paper. The first goal is to present the findings of the study. Overall, the findings indicated that all

participants integrated PBIS into their social studies instruction, yet lesson plans did not indicate plans for PBIS integration. The second goal is two-fold: to persuade the principal to provide PD on collaboration for teachers and encourage teachers and take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies lessons. The third is to propose an action plan for developing a collaborative team approach to lesson planning. The white paper provides details of the problem, study findings, action plan, conclusions, and references.

Resources

The success of implementing my action plan at SSES is dependent upon having the necessary resources and support. To propose my action plan, the school will need to schedule a time for me to meet with the administrative team to share and discuss the white paper. The principal will serve as the key resource for this white paper project. The principal supports this research and explicitly requested details of all findings on the white paper report. Peer-reviewed articles comprise literature used throughout the study during the development of the white paper. The resources accentuate solutions available through recent research studies, with the benefits and disadvantages of diverse solutions. I based solutions in the white paper on my research results and peer-review research articles.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

I may encounter the following potential barriers in adopting and implementing my proposal action plan:

1. rejection of findings and action plan;

2. district PD training not available on teacher collaboration;
3. lack of funding from district, and;
4. limited funds in the school budget for training resources.

A solution to addressing the first barrier as related to rejection of findings and action plan is to schedule a meeting with the principal and the academic coach at the school for a Q&A session. During the meeting, I will address the concerns of the attendees. I will ask the SSES instructional coach to help the teachers analyze the data and understand the significance of taking a collaborative team approach. This process will allow the instructional coach to persuade the teachers on how the PD training will help them to improve on the practices they are already doing. This process, referred to as 'constructive congruence' (Educational Research Newsletter, 2019), is based on Carl Rogers' Congruence Theory (Turner, Warren, & Harvey, 2015). Buy-in of teachers for on-going PD on integrating PBIS with instruction is necessary to effect positive changes in instructional practices (Piper & Zuilkowski, 2015).

Secondly, if the action plan to provide PD training to teachers on developing collaborative teams (phase 1) is challenged because such training does not already exist within the district, this would be a barrier. A potential solution to this barrier is for the principal to contact the school district about offering PD training on collaboration for staff development at SSES. The principal could present the study findings to the school district and inquire about a district-level PD trainer to implement the PD training at SSES. The PD should be targeted specifically to address planning instruction to integrate PBIS with social studies. Previous training on PBIS was conducted by the PBIS team,

who had been trained by a state department facilitator. However, the facilitator introduced the PBIS team to PBIS as school-wide initiatives to improve student behavior and reduce the loss of instructional time. The state department facilitator did not provide training on integrating PBIS with academics, yet this kind of training is needed by the teachers at SSES.

Thirdly, funding may be an issue. If the school district's budget does not approve funding for the training, this will present a barrier. A potential solution to this barrier would be to reduce cost by providing training to a smaller group (i.e., one administrator and three teachers), who would then provide training to all teachers at the school. If this solution is not possible, an online learning module would be more cost effective for implementing the recommendations. The online module could be designed to present research-based behavioral and academic strategies to guide teachers on integrating PBIS with social studies instruction. This training technique would require teachers to be self-directed. Professional learning credits may be given if authorized by the school district.

Finally, providing resources (such as hardcopies of white paper, PBIS resources, and lesson plan development resources) may be a barrier if the school budget is limited. The potential solution to this barrier is sharing presentation materials, rather than providing individual copies per stakeholder. One copy of the white paper could be provided per administrator and two copies per each grade level (grades K-5). Training materials may also be available in the main office to be checked-out by teachers for a limited time.

Proposal for Implementation

Upon approval of this doctoral study project by Walden University, I will email the white paper project to the principal of SSES. I will send a cover letter with the white paper requesting an appointment time to present the white paper to the principal and other administrative members (i.e., assistant principal, lead teacher, social studies department chair). The principal is at liberty to invite teachers, particularly grade-level chairpersons, and other stakeholders to addend the meeting. I will give everyone attending the meeting a paper copy of the white paper. I will present the white paper as an action plan for on-going professional development training to integrate PBIS with academics and to adopt and implement a collaborative team approach to integrate PBIS in social studies instruction.

Timetable. Following the white paper presentation, the proposed timetable for implementing the project is as follows. The proposed time for the presentation of the white paper project is during week 1 of the spring semester of 2021. After the formal presentation and the principal's approval, the principal will schedule a meeting to inform the teachers of the findings and action plan. The principal will then plan and schedule needed PD for teachers, with possible assistance from other administrators (i.e., assistant principal, lead teacher, social studies department chair) and SSES, PBIS training team. During week 9 of the spring semester of 2021, teachers should start PD training for learning how to take a collaborative team approach to integrating PBIS with social studies instruction. Because teachers already have bi-weekly grade-level meetings, they can discuss plans for designing the collaborative approach (CA) team during these

meetings, after completing PD training. The CA team may consist of one nominated teacher from each grade level, the grade level chairperson, and individuals from the SSES, PBIS training team. The CA team will determine a schedule for planning meetings and training to prepare for the implementation of the action plan during the fall semester of 2021.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Researcher

As the researcher, my role and responsibilities are to provide research findings and design a project to address the problem of not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies instruction. As an outcome of this study, I chose a white paper project, based on subthemes and themes that emerged from data analysis. I will present the white paper to the SSES principal and other administrators/teachers (invited by principal) to provide in-depth details of research findings and an action plan for solving the problem. I was approved to collect and analyze data by Walden Institutional Review Board, approval number 10-29-18-0134218. The chair, methodologist, and University Research Review member provided guidance and constructive feedback to ensure the quality of my project study.

Project Evaluation Plan

The goal of the white paper resulted from subthemes and themes that emerged from data analysis. The white paper is designed to present in-depth details of the problem and research findings. The white paper provides an action plan for needed PD training and a collaborative team approach to implementing PBIS. I chose to design a white paper because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs

of the school. The effectiveness of the white paper presentation will be evaluated using a formative assessment, a questionnaire (Appendix A).

Justification for Type of Evaluation

A formative evaluation tool, a questionnaire, will be used to collect feedback and reflections from attendees (principal, administrative staff, and teachers) after the presentation (Appendix A). The questionnaire will consist of questions to collect quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the attendees' comprehension of recommendations stated in the white paper. Quantitative responses to statements will be documented using a Likert scale where: 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree or disagree; 4 = agree; and 5 = strongly agree. I will also collect qualitative responses by using open-ended questions and provide space for participant responses. All response data will be examined to verify the effectiveness of the presentation; validate conclusions for needed improvements; and verify specific plans for improving the presentation (Creswell, 2012b; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). The quantitative data will help me determine, in general, if I need to improve my presentation. However, the specifics of the needed improvements will not be indicated. The qualitative data will help me determine if recommendations will or will not be implemented.

Goals of the Evaluation

Four goals of the evaluation are to determine: if recommendations will be put into practice; possible barriers to putting the recommendation into practice; strengths and weaknesses of the presentation; and sufficiency of information presented by the facilitator. The goals will be determined as related to organization, quality of materials,

and stated objectives. Overall, I want to assess if information presented to the principal and administrations is comprehensible enough to help them understand instructional changes needed based on study results.

Project Implications

I chose to design a white paper because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school. The white paper was developed to address planning needs for integrating PBIS with instruction, determined from the analysis of findings. The findings indicated the need to extend instruction planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. The white paper details findings, related research, and a research-based action plan on how to address planning PBIS integration with social studies instruction. The findings may be used to meet the instructional needs of current teachers at SSES. Also, the white paper may be used to develop PBIS training for new teachers, who could not benefit from being trained by the PBIS team during the 2016/2017 school year.

Possible Social Change Implications

The white paper will be used to provide an action plan for implementating PBIS through teacher collaboration to facilitate instruction and to engage students in learning. By collaborating, teachers may address student needs by sharing, adopting, and implementing strategies what will help them improve student engagement. On the local level, the white paper project may be useful in informing school improvement efforts at SSES. Through improved engagement, student learning may improve, academic scores may increase, and students may prepare better for middle school, high school, college,

future careers, and life in general. In a broader context, such improvements will impact social change as a result of helping students at the Title I school to become productive and proficient citizens.

Conclusion

In section 3, details of the rationale, supporting literature, description, goals, evaluation plan, implementation methods, study barriers, and implications of social change for my project were presented. A research-based action plan for professional development training to integrate PBIS across the curriculum academics and to incorporate a collaborative team approach to integrating PBIS in social studies instruction were explained. Details of the following components were explained in this section: research on the write paper genre, white paper, professional development, meeting professional development needs of teachers, active participation in professional development, collaboration; collaborative team approach, benefits of teacher collaboration, and approaches to teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS. Plans for the white paper project were presented, consisting of descriptions of needed resources, proposal for the action plan, and an evaluation plan. The section was concluded by detailing the project implications of social change.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

The project study was conducted to address the problem of not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with social studies at a rural Title I elementary school in a southern state (pseudonym: SSES). To address the problem, I collected and analyzed perceptions of teachers on how they integrated PBIS with social studies instruction. I chose a white paper project because PBIS training should be ongoing, sustained, and long term (Sugai & Horner, 2014). A white paper outlining an action plan for developing needed PD is more appropriate than a few days of PD (Hirsh, Killion, & Pollard, 2015). I chose a white paper because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school.

White papers are used to identify a problem and present a solution to persuade and inform stakeholders on actions to take to solve the problem (Malone & Wright, 2017). I also reviewed social studies lesson plans and compared lesson plan data to interview data. The findings indicated the need to extend instructional planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. The white paper provides study findings, current related research, and a research-based action plan. Section 4 provides a summary of the study by indicating the strengths, recommendations, and limitations of the white paper. The white paper provides (a) details of the action plan for proposed approaches to addressing and solving the problem; (b) a description of what was learned, specific to the overall significance of the work and the impact for positive social change; and (c) a reflective analysis of my

growth and learning as a practitioner, scholar, and project developer. Finally, implications, applications, and directions for future research are detailed.

Project Strengths

I determined four strengths of the contents of the white paper. The first strength is that the information is presented using concise and comprehensible approaches to help stakeholders (i.e., principal, administrators, and teachers) identify the problem and understand why it is a problem. The second strength is the contents will help stakeholders perceive the need to address the problem (Malone & Wright, 2017). I will give the stakeholders an in-depth report of findings as well as an action plan to help them make decisions about solving the problem. A third strength is that the action plan is research-based, which verifies reasons for using the action plan as a solution to the problem (Sakamuro, Stolley, & Hyde, 2015). An action plan, based on research, will help stakeholders understand how to apply the proposed solution to the problem (Pershing, 2015) to make the needed improvements (Campbell & Naidoo, 2016). The fourth strength is that the white paper will initiate an action plan (process) for filling the practice gap at SSES. The white paper will provide the stakeholders with facts, logic, and a research-based plan for solving the identified problem (Graham, 2019; Hayes, 2019; Lyons & Luginsland, 2014). During the white paper presentation, the principal and teachers can determine a schedule for discussing and initiating the action plan.

Project Limitations

I identified three limitations of my white paper project. First, scheduling a presentation time during the school year may present a challenge because of limited time

due to previously scheduled events, meetings, mandated PD training, department meetings, faculty meeting, grade-level meetings, parent teacher conferences, and more. Second, white paper presentation attendance is limited to administrators and teachers of SSES. However, the selection of attendees is dependent upon the discretion of the principal. The principal will determine the criteria for attendance and the number of stakeholders allowed to attend the presentation. The third limitation is that the school budget may not provide funding for extra training and development of teachers. Limited funding may reduce the availability of presentation resources (e.g., hard copies of the white paper, PBIS resources, and lesson plan development resources). Limited funding will prevent materials and training from being available to each stakeholder (21 teachers and 2 administrators).

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

I chose to design a white paper to present findings from the study, research on the problem, and an action plan for solving the problem at SSES. Before determining that the white paper was the best approach to the problem, I considered evaluating the PBIS implementation process. My focus could have been on determining the fidelity of implementation of PBIS as the independent variable and the office discipline referral (ODR) report data as the dependent variable. I could have selected a survey to measure the fidelity of implementing PBIS strategies and reviewed the current ODR report.

The data on the ODR reports from the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years could be compared to the data on the 2014-2015 report. The 2014-2015 report was used by the school district to mandate implementation of PBIS at SSES as a school

improvement strategy. The ODR report contains relevant data on behavioral issues, which are often associated with student achievement challenges. Changes in the ODR data reports could have been used to determine the fidelity of PBIS implementation to increase the effective use of instructional time and student engagement. From such a study, a recommendation to address the problem could have been professional development training for the teachers on implementing PBIS strategies with fidelity. According to Bayar (2014), teachers consider PD effective if it is based on their needs and provided continuously to address their needs. As a result, I questioned how I should design the PD. I researched PD for implementing PBIS but did not find any studies on research-based PD training for integrating PBIS with social studies instruction.

Another recommendation could have been to develop an instructional guide with research-based behavioral and academic strategies. The guide would have provided teachers with strategies for integrating PBIS with social studies instruction and improving student engagement. I viewed a study that helped me to determine that PD training or an instructional guide would not have been the best approach for my study. Both projects would have entailed plans for changing instructional practices. According to Whitworth and Chiu (2015), specific to facilitating changes in instructional practices, the development of PD is a critical role of school and district leaders. Castillo, March, Tan, Stockslager, and Brundage (2016) affirmed that PD training is directly dependent upon the degree of support provided to educators by school and district leaders. However, school district leaders and school administrators should support and provide PD based on current research (Voogt et al., 2015). These factors helped me to understand that I could

not provide PD training for the teachers because I am not a school leader at SSES or a leader in that school district.

I currently serve as director of education at a private, faith-based institution and recognize that when teachers participate in PD aligned to their instructional needs, instructional practices improve, and achievement increases. However, the success of PD depends on teachers and administrators collaborating on needed improvements in instructional practices (Castillo et al., 2016). These factors helped me determine that the SSES teachers needed PD training to learn how to collaborate on lesson planning and needed to take a collaborative approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

I chose a white paper project because the findings indicated the need to extend instructional planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. In the white paper, I have presented an action plan for solving the problem because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school. This project study supported my growth as a practitioner, scholar, and project developer by helping me to develop a process of intellectual inquiry. The process entailed learning how to identify and research a specific problem by determining methods to examine the problem, collecting information (data) related to the problem, analyzing data, researching possible solutions to the problem, and determining steps for solving the problem. The most important lesson I learned about the research process is that I must be objective in my acquisition of knowledge. During the research

process and classroom discussions, I learned how to logically absorb, organize, integrate, and share newly acquired knowledge as I developed critical thinking skills. The search for facts related to the problem helped me be less judgmental and more factually oriented.

Writing this doctoral study document presented me with unexpected challenges. During the writing process, I was challenged to do more than just summarize information obtained from research articles. I needed to align facts obtained from peer-reviewed articles with analysis of data and determine a solution for the problem. The search for needed resources caused me to rely on the support of a Walden librarian to improve my understanding of how to use search terms and search engines. Initially, I tried the process on my own, but I wasted too much time viewing articles that did not specifically relate to my topic. In becoming a research practitioner, I overcame the challenge of determining how to write, by learning what to write in conducting a research study.

In the development and evaluation of the project, I learned the significance of searching for a solution to a problem. I discovered that problems are easier to research than solutions to those problems. I found that the problem of not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction is not unique. Over the past few years, researchers have been looking for a solution to integrating academic models with behavior models to increase student learning and engagement (Ficarra & Quinn, 2014; Garland, 2017; Hayes & Gershenson, 2016). When I reviewed studies that used white papers, I discovered the white paper genre as a possible project choice. Had I not reviewed such studies, I would not have known anything about this genre. Such studies

led me to research the white paper genre because I was not sure whether a white paper was the best project for my study.

Effective teacher collaboration positively influences teacher performance and student learning (Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, & Grissom, 2015). The principle word in both cases is *effective,* which caused me to question what would be the most practical genre for my study. My conclusion was that I should write a white paper because it is an effective tool for improving performance in that it provides knowledge that can help the reader better understand how to apply a solution to a problem (Pershing, 2015). I determined that a questionnaire would be the best evaluation tool for the white paper because I could use feedback from attendees to validate needed improvements and verify specific plans for improving future presentations.

Through my research study and action plan, I have provided potential support to strengthen the foundation that teachers at SSES are already using. The support will help the teachers improve plans for integrating PBIS with social studies and instructional practices. Strengthening the instructional foundation of teachers will enable them to better address student behavioral and learning needs, as well as reduce the loss of instructional time. Overall, this research process has helped me to realize my ability to function in a leadership role to influence positive change by providing strategies for facilitating instruction and improving student engagement. These changes will help teachers develop more confident and competent students at the Title I school, where students struggle to meet learning proficiency goals. Most importantly, through the

research process, I have become more confident in my current leadership role in exploring a problem, researching answers, and proposing a solution.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

I chose a white paper project because the findings indicated the need to extend instructional planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. In the white paper, I presented an action plan for solving the problem because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school. While reflecting on the importance of my study, I recall my academic journey to not only advance my learning, but also use that knowledge to be successful in identifying a problem and providing a solution. The most significant aspect of my work was the effort to bring attention to challenges that teachers face when implementing new programs, specific to their perceptions. As a teacher, I recall asking my students if they understood the directions before attempting any academic task. If they had questions, I would provide answers. If they appeared not to understand, I would provide examples or model my expectations. My overall aim was to understand their perspectives on my requirements.

This project has enabled me to understand the significance of perceptions. I realize that teachers are bombarded with information and expectations, as each school year brings additional challenges and requirements. However, determining whether teachers fully comprehended what they were asked to do was not the focus of this study. I recognize that expectations without sufficient explanation may result in misinterpretation (Aslanargun, 2015). Aslanargun (2015) affirmed that the quality of

instruction is dependent upon teacher performance in response to the expectations of the principal. Considering this factor, I understand the significance of equipping teachers with appropriate PD training to help them meet requirements of mandated implementations (i.e., PBIS). Moreover, through collaboration, teachers can better conceptualize strategies for instructional practices by sharing their perceptions and expertise.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

I chose a white paper project because the findings indicated the need to extend instructional planning practices beyond the initial PBIS training to address the problem of integrating PBIS with social studies. In the white paper I presented an action plan for solving the problem because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school. I designed the white paper to be used by the administrator to improve teacher accountability for integrating PBIS with social studies instruction. Such improvements will help to develop more confident and competent students at the Title I school, which may lead to positive social change. This study could also bring positive social change by providing research-based data to district leaders and policy makers to obtain needed funding and resources for training teachers. Training will be available for all teachers within the district to help improve their effectiveness in integrating PBIS with academic instruction. Improving teacher effectiveness positively influences the academic achievement of students and provides students with tools to have successful careers, which will contribute to positive social change by impacting the development of a proficient workforce to sustain the economy.

The first application of the project entails presenting a white paper to stakeholders at SSES, the study school. Afterward, I would like to present the findings and the action plan to the school district for the benefit of other schools mandated to implement PBIS. Currently, SSES is the only elementary school in the study school district implementing PBIS. However, other elementary schools may decide to implement PBIS, considering the program is in operation at all of the middle and high schools in that school district. After sharing my white paper at the district level, I would like to present it at state and national conferences to provide research-based data for implementing PBIS with instruction. PBIS is currently implemented in more than 24,500 schools in the United States (Georgia Department of Education, 2017a). Eighty-five percent of problems with integrating PBIS with academic instruction involve the implementation process and the environment, rather than just student issues (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015). Implementing PBIS involves investigating the instructional system, implementation process, and learning environment (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015).

Future research may entail investigating perceptions of SSES teachers 1 year after providing PD on collaboration and teachers taking a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies. Additionally, this study could be conducted at the middle and secondary grade levels in the study school district to investigate perceptions of teachers on how they integrate PBIS with instruction. Findings may determine support that middle and high school teachers need to integrate PBIS with instruction and better engage students in learning.

Conclusion

This research study was focused on exploring the perceptions of teachers on how they integrated PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Using the findings, I designed a white paper to provide information to help the principal understand the issue better and make a data-based decision about solving the problem (see Malone & Wright, 2017). I chose a white paper project because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school. The white paper provides (a) in-depth details on literature related to the problem, (b) results from analysis of interview and lesson plan review data, and (c) an action plan for solving the problem. I used results from the qualitative data to help the principal understand what the teachers lacked in planning and integrating PBIS with social studies instructional processes. In the white paper, I presented the two-phase action plan to help teachers improve planning integration of PBIS with instruction. Improved lesson planning may reduce the loss of instructional time, thereby providing more opportunities for student learning. Professional development training on teacher collaboration (Phase 1), will improve teacher learning (McIntosh & Goodman, 2016). Allowing teachers to take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies (Phase 2) will improve instructional practices (McIntosh & Goodman, 2016). Improvements in these two areas will influence social change at the study school and local community by equipping teachers to help students to become productive and proficient citizens.

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Integrating Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports

with Social Studies Instruction

DESIGNED FOR:
SOUTHERN STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL

A White Paper
by
Constance Michelle Davenport

Goals for the white paper:

1. Present findings of the study;
2. Persuade stakeholders to provide on-going professional development;
3. Persuade stakeholders to take a collaborative team approach to lesson planning.

Introduction

The problem this white paper addressed is not knowing how teachers at a rural Title I elementary school in a southern state integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Because of the loss of instructional time, the local school district mandated implementation of PBIS at the school as a strategy to increase effective use of instructional time and student engagement. However, teachers were left with the responsibility of deciding how to integrate PBIS with academic instruction. This white paper presents the results of a study that compared interview responses with social studies lesson plans to determine if teachers understood how to effectively implement PBIS to promote delivery of academic instruction and positive student behavior.

The findings were used to design this white paper to help the principal understand the issue better and make a data-based decision about solving the problem (Malone & Wright, 2017). A white paper project was chosen because a few days of planned PD may not meet the ongoing, systemic needs of the school. The purpose of this white paper is to presents in-depth details of research findings from this study and propose a solution for solving the problem (Hayes, 2019). The white paper summarizes the problem that guided the research study. Findings from the research are presented, along with explanations of professional development and teacher collaboration. The white paper provides details of processes for helping teachers to take a collaborative team approach to improve planning of integrating PBIS with social studies instruction. The white paper is concluded with an explanation of an action plan the principal could consider as related to approaches to planning integration of PBIS with social studies.

The Problem

The problem at the rural Title I elementary school in a southern state is the principal does not know how teachers integrate PBIS with academics to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Prior to PBIS implementation, disruptive behaviors of students prevented teachers from meeting state and district requirements for use of instructional time, based on pacing guides and curriculum maps. During the 2014-2015 school year, disruptive behaviors of students resulted in 8,060 minutes (134 hours) loss of instructional time. This is a significant loss of 16.58% of the State requirement of 48,600 minutes of instruction per school year (Georgia Department of Education, 2012). The loss of instructional time has negatively affected students learning opportunities and preparing for assessments. PBIS was implemented at the school during the winter semester of the 2016-2017 school year to reduce incidences of disruptive behavior and loss (misuse) of instructional time. However, not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with academics, to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning, interfered with determining how teachers used the allotted instructional time.

Research Questions:

RQ1: How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with social studies to facilitate instruction?

RQ2: How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning?

Findings of Study

A qualitative descriptive case study was conducted to explore teachers' perspectives at the study school about how they integrated PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Semi-structured interviews and review of social studies lesson plans were used as data collection instruments for this research study. Semi-structured interviews were used to probe, understand, and clarify responses. Social studies lesson plans were examined to gather more in-depth information, beyond participant responses; investigate how the teachers planned for integration of PBIS with social studies instruction; and support corroboration of findings.

Findings from interviews indicated varied perspectives of teachers on how they integrated PBIS with social studies. They shared their use of various instructional methods of integrating constructs of PBIS with instruction to engage students in learning.

In addressing RQ1, findings from analysis of interview data indicated all participants integrated constructs of by modeling, prompting, monitoring, and reinforcing instruction, however details varied from interview responses on lesson plans. Interview data revealed that all 12 of the teachers shared ways they modeled instruction, however, strategies for modeling were lacking in lesson plans of all 12 participants. Pertaining to prompting, all teachers shared ways they prompted students during instruction, yet, methods of prompting differed from grade to grade. Pertaining to monitoring, all teachers reflected during interviews and indicated on lesson plans how they monitored student performance during instructional time, yet strategies varied from teacher to teacher.

Findings for interviews indicated that all teachers expressed how they reinforced learning, inclusive of giving praise and prizes. Data from review of lesson plans for grades 2-5 indicated the integration of the PBIS instructional strategy, reinforcing, using peer-mediation through group work (i.e., jigsaw), working with a partner, cooperative learning to assist struggling students, but procedures for processes and methods of evaluating effectiveness of these processes were not written in lesson plans.

The interview findings indicated all participants acknowledged they integrated constructs of PBIS into their social studies instruction yet plans for PBIS integration were not shown on lesson plans. The findings were used to determine the need for teachers to plan appropriate applications of PBIS on lesson plans.

In addressing RQ2, information on teachers' perceptions of PBIS as facilitating and engaging students in learning, was obtained from interview responses. Based on findings from interviews, all teachers responded affirmatively they perceived PBIS as facilitating and engaging students in learning. During thematic analysis of interview data, four themes emerged: Peer Mediated Instruction (Theme 1); Teacher Student Relationships (Theme 2); Positive Reinforcement (Theme 3); and Optimize Student Learning (Theme 4).

The interview findings indicated all participants acknowledged they integrated constructs of PBIS into their social studies instruction, yet strategic plans for PBIS integration were not shown on lesson plans.

Action Plan and Related Literature Explained

A search for related literature was conducted to find a solution for determining how teachers integrate PBIS with academics. The search for related literature was based on the following terms: *on-going professional development training; effective professional development; active participation in professional development, collaboration; collaborative team approach, benefits of teacher collaboration; and approaches to teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS*. Allowing the teachers to take a collaborative team approach to planning lessons emerged as possible solution the principal could consider addressing the problem of not knowing how teachers integrate PBIS with academics.

Action Plan: Phase 1

During phase I the principal is to provide professional development training on teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS with academics. After investigating perceptions of teachers on how they integrate PBIS with social studies, it was determined that PD training on teacher collaboration could help teachers collectively plan lessons to address inconsistent applications of PBIS.

What does research say about on-going professional development (PD)?

Rivkin and Schiman (2015) affirmed that the use of instructional methods is necessary for determining instructional support needed for positively effecting student learning. PD can provide teachers with activities to enhance knowledge, instruction, accountability, skills, technology, and communication (Felipe, Silva, Stulting, & Golnik, 2014). However, best practices for PD training need to be examined to provide teachers with effective resources to promote learning and consistent instructional practices (Hirsh, Killion, & Pollard, 2015).

De Neve, DeVos, and Tuytens (2015) investigated the relationship between professional learning and personal resources for implementing differentiated instruction in 65 primary schools (227 teachers). The researchers provided empirical evidence of why beginning teachers need to receive professional learning before implementing new instructional strategies. According to De Neve et al. (2015), on-going PD will help teachers better understand how to implement intervention processes which has a positive effect on instructional practices. By engaging in on-going PD training, teachers at the study school can learn how to successfully plan lessons to integrate PBIS with instruction.

In a qualitative study, Castillo, March, Tan, Stockslager, and Brundage (2016) investigated educators of 12 school districts (34 schools) to determine relations between PD training focused on response to intervention (RTI) and educators' beliefs about RTI implementation. PD focused on RTI processes resulted in positive changes in educators making data-based decisions when implementing RTI. Castillo, et al. (2016) affirmed that PD training should be designed to match individual school needs, as needs may vary from school to school and PD activities should be designed to meet the professional learning needs of individual classrooms and/or educators.

Castillo et al. (2016) further supported identifying needed skills as a critical component to planning PD training on implementations. When PD training is targeted to meeting instructional needs, teachers will be more successful in their practices. However, the success of the PD depends on teachers and administrators collaborating about needed improvements

in instructional practices (Castillo et al., 2016). The researchers affirmed that no method of PD was found to be better than another, yet proposed questions about how to focus, design, and deliver PD for RTI training. Conversely, Castillo et al. (2016) affirmed PD training is directly dependent upon the degree of support provided to educators by school and district leaders.

Wert, Carpenter, and Fewell (2014) conducted a qualitative study investigating perceptions of 203 elementary teachers on benefits and barriers of the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. Perceived benefits of using RTI processes with their students were determined as: identification of student behavioral and academic needs; increased student learning; and fewer student referrals. Perceived benefits for teachers were determined as: increased level of PD; increased collaboration; differentiated instruction; and accountability. In addition, perceived barriers to using RTI processes were determined as lacking: training; knowledge; teacher buy-in; administrative support; and collaboration.

According to the researchers, determining effective PD depends on teachers collaborating about what is needed to improve instructional practices (Werts et al., 2014). These barriers, as related to collaboration and lack of training, aligned with the study findings. Findings indicated teachers needed PD training to learn how to collaborate lesson planning and take a teacher collaboration approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction.

Findings from both Castillo, et al. (2016) and Wert et al. (2014) applied to the study findings as processes of RTI and PBIS are based in differentiated instruction. According to researchers, differing learning needs of students can be addressed when teachers adjust instructional strategies to meet specific learning styles of students (Morgan, 2014; Tippett & Tobin, 2014; Valiandes, 2015). According to Morgan (2014), differential instruction can be used to address learning needs of both high and lower level students. Differentiated instruction is used by teachers to maximize student learning by helping students strive to achieve more (Dixon, Yssel, McConnell, & Hardin, 2014; Morgan, 2014).

Both RTI and PBIS approaches have three components: universal (Tier 1), target group (Tier 2), and individual (Tier 3) levels of intervention (Roden, 2015). Wert et al. (2014) affirmed that when teachers lack specific knowledge in implementing an intervention, it may be due to the lack of training on how to properly use the intervention. Findings from this study indicated teachers at the study school lacked planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction on lesson plans. Through on-going PD training, the teachers can learn strategies for effectively planning lessons for developing appropriate behavior for engaging students in learning.

Effective Profession Development

Whitworth and Chiu (2015) conducted a review of literature on designing PD for improving science education. The researchers found several factors that determine the effectiveness of PD: working conditions, teacher experience, school culture, self-efficacy, and teacher motivation. Also, critical roles of school and district leaders were indicated as necessary for supporting the development of needed PD to facilitate changes in instructional practices. When teachers participate in effective PD, teachers' instructional practices are improved and student learning and achievement increases.

Effective PD has been a central concern in education over the past decades (Bayer, 2014). In a qualitative study, Bayer (2014) sought to understand perspectives of teachers on effective PD. Bayar (2014) found that teachers consider PD effective if based on their needs and provided continuously to address the needs. Bayar (2014) also found that teachers considered opportunities for active participation to be a component of effective PD. The majority of teachers (12 out of 16) expressed dissatisfaction about being forced to sit and listen to facilitators; not being allowed to actively participate during PD training; and not having input in PD training conducted at their school. The teachers expressed their lack of learning effective teaching strategies was due to not being actively engaged during PD training.

Bayar affirmed that for PD training to be effective, it must be designed to: address teachers' perspectives of their PD needs; actively engage participants; meet school needs; involve teachers in planning PD activities; and provide quality instructors. These factors informed the first recommendation, to provide professional development (PD) training on teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS with academics. By addressing these needs through effective PD, teachers will learn how to plan and practice PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning.

Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner (2017) reviewed 35 research studies on PD that has been proven effective in improving teacher practices and student learning. The researchers determined that effective PD: is content focused; incorporates active learning (using adult learning theory); involves collaboration; uses models of effective practices; provides coaching and support; and offers opportunities for reflection and feedback (p. 4). These features align with principals of adult learning, determined by Knowles (1980). According to Knowles principals, when preparing PD for adults, designers of the training should consider the following factors: adult learners have to be self-directing; readiness for learning increases when there is a specific need to know; the reservoir of experience is a primary learning resource; life experiences of others add enrichment to the learning process; and adult learners have an inherent need for immediacy of applications. Based on these factors, the importance of providing teachers with opportunities to actively participate during PD training was identified.

In this study, perspectives of teachers were explored on how they integrate PBIS with social studies and their perceptions of PBIS as facilitating instruction and engaging students in learning. Findings of reported instructional practices were so varied that I wondered if the teachers were actively engaged in demonstrating use of PBIS. Yet, this concern was not considered until reviewing the previously shared studies. As a result, the importance of providing teachers opportunities for active learning during PD training was identified.

Critical skill training can be acquired by teachers through active participation during professional development. According to Berne, Degener, Hoch, & Manderino (2014), administrators need to provide job-embedded PD. Through actual applications of researched based teaching strategies during PD training, teachers can be provided with practical experience to help them address learning needs of students with more confidence.

In a quantitative study of 209 teachers (5th grade), Donnell and Gettinger (2019), found three components that promoted positive attitudes of teachers toward implementing RTI: self-efficacy; teacher beliefs; and professional development. However, the researchers affirmed during PD training on RTI implementations, teachers must be engaged in making decisions about components of implementations. The researchers supported that during PD training on implementations, teachers must be engaged in making decisions about components of implementations. In addition to allowing participants active participation opportunities during PD activities, Bayer indicated components of effective PD also consist of: matching needs of teachers; matching school needs; involving teachers in planning or designing PD activities; and providing quality instructors.

In a review of literature on PD, Whitworth and Chiu (2015) searched factors for designing effective PD for science instruction. The researchers identified the following contextual factors to consider while designing PD for teachers: motivation, experience, school culture, and working conditions. In addition, Whitworth and Chiu (2015) identified school and district science leaders as a major component missing from PD planning and implementation. This finding aligned with findings of Werts, Carpenter, and Fewell (2014), which indicated need for administrative support in helping to meet implementation needs. This concern was applied to this study and can be applied to any content area relative to planning effective PD.

Administrative support can help teachers meet implementation needs.

Action Plan: Phase II

During phase II, the teachers are to take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction. A collaborative team approach will permit all teachers opportunities to be involved in planning processes of PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Teachers will collaborate plans for implementing best practices and strategies for integrating PBIS using their knowledge and proven experiences. Teachers and other instructional support staff should be considered a significant part of planning best practices for implementing PBIS.

What does research say about teacher collaboration?

After conducting an analysis of American "expanded time schools", Davis (2015), found a positive correlation between teacher collaboration and improved student learning. Davis (2015), president of the National Center of Time and Learning declared, "As teacher work together to strengthen their teaching skills, they also can augment instructional practice dramatically, and thus make their time with student even more valuable" (p.26). By utilizing a collaborative team approach to planning processes of implementation, teachers will be more willing to utilize PBIS (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015). According to Hannigan & Hauser (2015), during teacher collaboration, components of effective implementation can be identified.

Benefits of Effective Collaboration

Several studies have been conducted during the past 30 years supporting positive impacts of teacher collaborative team approaches. Recent research studies have indicated teacher collaboration

improves instructional practices and student achievement. Using a quasi-experimental design, Goddard, Goddard, Sook and Miller (2015) tested theoretical linkages of principal leadership, collective efficacy beliefs of teachers, teacher collaboration, and student achievement. The researchers determined:

1) the degree of teacher collaboration to improve instruction depends on the principal's instructional leadership;
2) the principal's instructional leadership significantly predicts collective efficacy beliefs of teachers and influences collaboration; and
3) perceived collective efficacy of teachers is a positive predictor of student achievement.

The findings supported social cognitive theory by indicating when a principal promotes collaboration to improve instruction, the efficacy beliefs of teachers will be improved, resulting in improved student achievement. This study supports the significance of my action plan.

Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen, and Grissom (2015) support that teacher performance and student learning are positively influenced by effective teacher collaboration. The researchers conducted a quantitative study, during a 2 year period, to investigate collaboration practices of 9,000 teachers (336 schools) in Miami Dade County Public School System (MDCPS), the fourth largest school district in the U.S.A. Almost 90% of the teachers reported collaborative teams helped them to improve instructional practices. Collaboration was assessed as statistically similar in elementary and secondary schools, however, better quality collaboration was reported by teachers at schools with larger enrollments. Schools that engaged in better collaboration had statistically higher gains in math and reading achievement scores. The researchers determined that greater improvements in instructional practices and student achievement occurred at schools with better teacher collaboration.

Sun, Loeb, and Grissom (2016) collected 10 years of data from MDCPS for school years 2003-2013 to investigate math teachers, grades 3-8, who had transferred between schools. The researchers determined the influence of more effective transferring teachers on instruction of less effective incumbent teachers and student achievement. Differences in organizational structures of elementary and middle grade schools influence peer formation and as well as collaboration. However, the researchers found consistent evidence that the positive influence effective teachers had on less effective teachers resulted in improved academic performance of students of less effective teachers. This concept, referred to as a "positive spillover", is significant because strategic grouping of teachers can be used to increase student learning. This concept aligns with teacher collaboration, which comes in various forms, however, should be focused on incorporating teachers' experiences to create improvements in instruction and student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2015).

Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, and Kyndt (2015) conducted a systemic overview of 82 literature sources on teacher collaboration and affirmed the benefits ranged from improved teacher to student learning. Teachers benefit most from collaboration as related to: better job performance; increased motivation; enhanced morale; and more support from colleagues and administrators.

Educational performances of students progress when teachers collaborate. Vangrieken, et al. (2015) also affirmed the entire school benefits when teacher collaborate. As academic performances of students increase, schools undergo innovative cultural changes. According to Patterson, Weaver, Fletcher, Connor, Thomas, and Ross (2018), teacher collaboration increases students' interest in social studies and integrated content. The researchers determined that teachers perceived by collaborating plans for lessons, content and civic literacy were strengthened as related to motivation, depth of knowledge, and cross-curricular connections.

Carreño and Hernandez-Ortiz (2017) found in a qualitative case study that teacher collaboration ensures proven research-based standards of instruction are used to enhance student learning. The researchers interviewed 5 teachers and 5 mentors to investigate their perceptions of a co-planning (collaboration) program (English proficiency) and teacher mentoring, which had been implemented for 3 years. Co-planning provided teachers access activities and resources that made their classes more interesting and motivating due to integration of different perspectives in planning. Teacher mentoring is key to the success of the co-planning because teachers are made to feel more empowered (Carreño & Hernandez-Ortiz, 2017). Also, co-planning and mentoring are effective and efficient methods for lesson planning. According to Bennett (2019), teachers are more willing to seek and receive advice from other teachers than from outside sources.

Collaboration can help the teachers learn to plan and document researched-based strategies for implementing PBIS on lesson plans. Also, planned applications of PBIS can be viewed on lesson plans and recognized during instructional (observation) time by the administrator. This information can be used by the teachers and administrator to verify how PBIS was planned and actually implemented with social studies instruction to engage students in learning. When effective usage of instructional strategies has been determined, effective instructional strategies will be identified (McIntosh & Goodman, 2016). McIntosh and Goodman (2016) affirmed that effective integration of PBIS involves deliberate alignment with processes that result in improved behavioral and academic outcomes. By collaborating, the teachers can share elements of quality instruction for both academic and behavioral practices to strategically planning integration of PBIS to facilitate social studies lessons and engage students in learning.

Challenges of Teacher Collaboration

Collaboration is a challenge for most schools (Global State of Digital Learning Study, 2019). According to the Global State of Digital Learning Study (2019) of 89 countries (2,846 educators), over 30% of teachers and almost 50% of administrators consider collaboration a top priority. However, 30% of those administrators reported their biggest challenge is getting teachers to implement the collaboration process. The following reasons were given for why teacher collaboration was a challenge: lack of teacher commitment; limited time for planning, collaborating, and/or reflecting; and personality conflicts.

Yuan and Zhang (2016) investigated teacher collaboration in Chinese schools, a process referred to as joint lesson planning. The researchers concluded teacher collaboration is a developmental process

that incorporates various challenges, such as lack of structure, homogeneity of teachers, and superficial collaboration. According to Patterson et al. (2018), teachers are challenged with finding commonalties between disciplines and sources that will help connect the two content areas. Locating and incorporating sources are considered barriers to effective teacher collaboration (Patterson et al., 2018). Yuan and Zhang (2016) noted the failure of teacher collaboration is due to a gap between leaders and teachers. The researchers affirmed barriers to teacher collaboration as "insufficient collaborative time, ineffective school leadership, unfavorable accountability policy, and lack of collaborative professional culture" (p. 219).

Yuan and Zhang (2016) affirmed the development of teacher collaboration is not totally dependent upon teachers, but requires support from other stakeholders, such as school leaders. The researchers sustained that teachers will become more actively engaged in collaboration when supported by school leaders. With such support, teachers will be more willing to share their pedagogical experiences during lesson planning which will help other teachers feel more supported, when otherwise planning independently (Yuan and Zhang (2016). According to Ronfeldt et al. (2015), for meaningful teacher collaboration to occur, school leaders must provide support and needed resources. Structures, routines, as well as protocol to facilitate teacher interactions must be implemented to focus effectively on instructional concerns (Ronfeldt et al., 2015). This finding aligned with findings from studies conducted by Whitworth and Chiu (2015) and Werts, Carpenter, and Fewell (2014) which indicated the significance of needed support from educational leaders and school districts to provide PD (resources) to help meet instructional needs of teachers.

Collaborate Plans for Integrating PBIS

Planning lessons for developing appropriate behavior is a major component of PBIS implementation (OSEP National Technical Assistance Center, 2018). Effective integration of PBIS with academic instruction permits teachers to support academic and behavioral competence of students (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). While developers of the PBIS framework do not endorse any specific instructional approach (Horne, Sugai, and Lewis, 2015), they support the use of evidence-based practices (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). According to Horne, Sugai, and Lewis (2015), while implementing PBIS, a research-based instructional approach should be used to provide students with a wide range of opportunities to be academically successful, as focus is placed on their social, emotional, and behavioral needs).

According to McCurdy, Thomas, Truckenmiller, Rich, Hillis, and Lopez (2016), staff and teacher commitment as well as collaboration are critical to the effectiveness of PBIS. After investigating the impact of School-wide PBIS on students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBDs). The researchers affirmed the success of PBIS requires taking a collaborative approach to implementation consisting of focusing on school-wide planning of academic and behavioral expectations, differentiating instruction, and teaching social skills to improve student behavioral and academic achievement (McCurdy, et al., 2016).

In this study, findings indicated that the teachers need to understand how to plan appropriate applications of PBIS on lesson plans. By collaborating, the teachers can support each other in planning appropriate instructional applications of PBIS (Ficarra & Quinn, 2014; Hayes & Gershenson, 2015). Individually, teachers may lack knowledge in planning specific instructional strategies of PBIS, but collectively they can benefit from each other by sharing their instruction and practice successes. As varied as their perspectives were on how they integrated PBIS with social studies, a collaborative team approach to writing lesson plans can help the teachers build and strengthen their practices. With this collaborative approach, the principal would understand how teachers integrate PBIS with academics because evidence of implementation would be on lesson plans and in practice.

Academic instructional plans should indicate how PBIS is integrated to support behavioral competence of students to verify how this process is being implemented (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). This can be addressed by taking a collaborative team approach to lesson planning. Effective integration of academic and behavioral supports should consist of emotional, social, and behavioral content within academic instruction being addressed and differentiated instruction should be matched to students' academic, emotional, social, and behavioral needs (OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019). By taking a collaborative team approach, SSES teachers can purposefully plan lessons to include these components.

According to researchers, integration of purposefully planned correction techniques (i.e., PBIS) will help to prevent negative behaviors that may interfere with learning (Ennis, Royer, Lane, & Griffin, 2017). By using a collaborative team approach to lesson planning, integrating PBIS with academics will be effectively addressed to meet the learning needs of all students. However, for the collaborative approach to be effective, teachers must focus on identifying effective instructional strategies for integrating PBIS with social studies (Hannigan & Hauser, 2015; Meador, 2017; Rivkin & Schiman, 2015; Voogt, Laferriere, Breuleaux, Itow, Hickey, & McKenney, 2015).

A collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with academics can be used to effectively address learning needs of all students.

Summary

As a solution to solving the problem, the white paper action plan: to provide professional development training on teacher collaboration for integrating PBIS with academics; and allow teachers to take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction. The action plan was determined as the best approach to integrating PBIS with social studies. The action plan was based on researched based methods for improving integrating PBIS with instruction.

The white paper is designed to provide information to help the principal gain a better understanding of the issue and make a decision about solving the problem. The white paper emphasizes how effective implementation of PBIS, through teacher collaboration, may improve instruction. As a result of improved instructions,

teachers may address student needs by using strategies that will help to improve student engagement and learning.

Timetable

This timeline will be implemented to present in-depth details of the problem and research findings, and provide recommendations of steps to taking a collaborative team approach to implementing PBIS.

- January 2021. Email white paper project to SSES principal for a 2-week review period. During the review period, the principal will be contacted to schedule an initial presentation of the white paper with him to discuss details of the project and address Q & A. If the principal approves the white paper project, a formal meeting will be scheduled to present the project to other administrators and teachers at SSES.
- January 2021. After the initial presentation and the principal's approval, the principal will inform the teachers of the formal meeting to the white paper project. During the meeting, findings from the study and recommendations will be presented. A Q&A session will also be conducted.
- As a follow-up, the principle will plan and schedule needed PD for teachers on taking a collaborative team approach to planning PBIS with instruction. The principal may employ the assistance of other administrators (i.e., assistant principal, lead teacher, social studies department chair) and SSES, PBIS training team.
- March 2021. Teachers start PD training for learning how to take a collaborative team approach to integrating PBIS with social studies instruction.
- April 2021. Following completion of PD training, because teachers already have bi-weekly grade level meetings, teachers can discuss plans for designing the Collaborative Approach (CA) team during regularly scheduled bi-weekly grade level meetings. The CA team may consist of one nominated teacher from each grade level, the grade level chairperson and/or individuals from the SSES, PBIS training team. The CA team will determine a schedule for planning meetings and training to prepare for implementation of the project during spring semester, 2020.
- August 2021. Begin the collaborative team approach to helping teachers improve planning of instruction to reduce loss of instructional time and provide more opportunities for student learning.

Conclusion

The development of the white paper was the result of study to explore how teachers at a rural Title I elementary school in a southern state integrate PBIS in social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The white paper was designed to provide information to help the principal to gain a better understanding of the issue and make a decision about solving the problem (Malone & Wright, 2017). Findings from interview data indicated varied perspectives of teachers on how they integrated PBIS with social studies, entailing various instructional methods of integrating constructs of PBIS with instruction. However, lesson plan findings indicated teachers did not provide details of plans for integrating PBIS. As a result, the white paper project was developed to inform the principal how teachers integrate PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. The white paper was used to emphasize the significance of utilizing perspectives of teachers when integrating new instructional processes to help the principal understand what the teachers may lack in implementing PBIS.

The white paper provides background of the problem and researched based action plan for improving how teachers integrate PBIS to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. By providing ongoing professional development training on teacher collaboration and allowing the teachers to take a collaborative team approach to planning integration of PBIS with social studies instruction, teachers could potentially improve how they integrate PBIS with social studies to facilitate instruction and engage students in learning. Teachers can learn how to successfully integrate PBIS by engaging in ongoing PD specific to their actual practices to better understand and implement processes of PBIS. Also, by taking a collaborative team approach to planning processes of implementation, teachers will be more willing to use constructs of PBIS. According to Patterson et al. (2019), appropriate professional development and teacher collaboration provides resources and time teachers need for planning research-based instruction. When the teachers take a collaborative team approach to integrating PBIS with social studies, teacher learning and instructional practices will be improved (McIntosh & Goodman, 2016). Improvements in these two areas will result in improved student behavior, engagement, and learning opportunities (Vangrieken et al., 2015).

Presentation: Integrating PBIS with Social Studies Instruction
Evaluation Form

Name: _____

Date: _____

Evaluator (circle one)	
Administrator	Teacher

For each of the statements below, circle the number that best indicates your response, where:
1 = Strongly disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Purpose communicated clearly	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2. Organized and easy to follow	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3. Presenter exhibited a clear understanding of topic	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4. Presenter was well prepared	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
5. Presenter spoke clearly	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6. Presentation time used effectively	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
7. Presenter engaged audience	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
8. Presenter responded to audience questions and comments	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

9. What did you like most about the presentation?

10. What areas might you suggest for improvement not listed above?

11. What do you think about the recommendations being put into practice?

12. What barriers may interfere with putting the recommendations into practice?

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Appendix B: Interview Questions Aligned to Research Questions

Interview Questions Adapted from Questions to Guide Instruction (Chaparro, Nese, & McIntosh, 2015)	Research Questions
1. How do you relate new concepts to previously taught concepts? **2.** How do you make new concepts more relevant for students? **3.** What steps do you take to provide background knowledge for students who lack the background knowledge needed to be successful in the lesson(s)? **4.** How do you prime (prepare) instruction so information builds on students' prerequisite knowledge? **5.** Do you provide opportunities for students to respond during instructional time? Explain. **6.** How do you monitor student performance during instruction time? **7.** When students use appropriate responses, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)? **8.** When students responses are incorrect, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)? Probing questions/statements: a. What method/strategy did you choose? b. You mentioned…Will you explain that more? c. What did you decide to do? d. What feedback did you get? e. Give me more details please. f. I would like to know more about that. g. Please give me an example	Research Question 1: How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with Social Studies to facilitate instruction?
9. How/ do you engage students in observable ways (response cards, choral reading, etc.) during teacher-directed instruction? **10.** How/do you use peer-mediated instruction (i.e. peer tutoring) as another approach to increase opportunities to respond? **11.** How do you go about engaging all students (e.g., students of color, ELL students, students with disabilities) in the lesson? **12.** How/do you provide behavioral performance	Research Question 2 How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning?

feedback to students? **13.** When students display positive behavior, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)? **14.** When students display inappropriate behavior, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)? **15.** In relationship to behavior, how/do you provide (equitable) responses to all student groups (e.g., students of color, ELL students, students with disabilities)? Probing questions/statements: a. What method/strategy did you choose? b. You mentioned…Will you explain that more? c. What did you decide to do? d. What feedback did you get? e. Give me more details please. f. I would like to know more about that. g. Please give me an example.	

Chaparro, E.A., Nese, R.N.T., & McIntosh, K. (2015). Examples of engaging instruction to increase equity in education. Retrieved from http://www.pbis.org/Common/Cms/files/pbisresources/Engaging%20Instruction%20to%20Increase%20Equity%20in%20Education.pdf

Appendix C: Protocol and Checklist for Interview Questions

Researcher name: _____

Interviewee's ID letter:_____ Grade taught:_____

Number of years in education field as a classroom teacher: _____

Date: _____ Time_____

Number of years in education field as a classroom teacher: _____

I am going to ask the following questions to determine answers to my research questions. Please answer according to what you actually do. Please remember the interview is being audio-recorded and notes may be taken.

Interview questions, adapted from Questions to Guide Instruction (Chaparro Nese, & McIntosh, 2015), obtained by public domain, matched to research questions.

Checklist for Interview

Participant's Name _____

Interview Questions	**Indicate prompt(s) used by listing alphabet:**	**Researcher Comments**
Aligned to Research *Question 1* *How do teachers integrate Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports with Social Studies to facilitate instruction?*	What method/strategy did you choose? You mentioned…Will you explain that more? What did you decide to do? What feedback did you get? Give me more details please. You mentioned…I would like to know more about that. Please give me an example.	
How do you relate new concepts to previously taught		

concepts?		
How do you make new concepts more relevant for students?		
What steps do you take to provide background knowledge for students who lack the background knowledge needed to be successful in the lesson(s)?		
How do you prime (prepare) instruction so information builds on students' prerequisite knowledge?		
Do you provide opportunities for students to respond during instructional time? Explain.		
How do you monitor student performance during instruction time?		
When students use appropriate responses, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)?		
When students responses are incorrect, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)?		
Interview Questions	**Indicate prompt(s) used by listing alphabet:**	**Researcher**

Aligned to Research Question 2: How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning?	What method/strategy did you choose? You mentioned…Will you explain that more? What did you decide to do? What feedback did you get? Give me more details please. You mentioned…I would like to know more about that. Please give me an example.	**Comments**
How/ do you engage students in observable ways (response cards, choral reading, etc.) during teacher-directed instruction?		
How/do you use peer-mediated instruction (i.e. peer tutoring) as another approach to increase opportunities to respond?		
How do you go about engaging all students (e.g., students of color, ELL students, students with disabilities) in the lesson?		
How/do you provide behavioral performance feedback to students?		
When students display positive behavior, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)?		

When students display inappropriate behavior, what kind of feedback do you give them (consider tone of voice)?		
In relationship to behavior, how/do you provide (equitable) responses to all student groups (e.g., students of color, ELL students, students with disabilities)?		

Chaparro, E.A., Nese, R.N.T., & McIntosh, K. (2015). Examples of engaging instruction to increase equity in education. Retrieved from http://www.pbis.org/Common/Cms/files/pbisresources/Engaging%20Instruction%20to%20Increase%20Equity%20in%20Education.pdf

Appendix D: Protocol and Checklist for Lesson Plan Review

Five consecutive days of Social Studies lesson plans will be collected from participants to be reviewed for more-in-depth information on how teachers integrate PBIS with Social Studies instruction to facilitate instruction and engage student learning. The following questions, adapted from Questions to Guide Instruction (Chaparro Nese, & McIntosh, 2015), obtained online through public domain, will be used to view teachers' Social Studies lesson plans.

Teacher #_____ Grade taught _____

Research question: How do teachers integrate PBIS with Social Studies to facilitate instruction?

Questions for viewing lesson plans	**Place check to indicate Yes**	**Place check to indicate No**	**Researcher Comments**
Did teacher indicate how new concepts would be related to previously taught concepts?			
Did teacher indicate plans for making new concepts more relevant to students?			
Did teacher indicate plans for providing background knowledge for students who lack the background knowledge needed to be successful in the lesson?			

Research question: How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in social studies as facilitating and engaging students in learning?

Questions for viewing lesson plans	**Place check to indicate Yes**	**Place check to indicate No**	**Researcher Comments**
Does teacher's lesson plans indicate how students will be engaged in observable ways (response cards, choral reading, etc. during teacher-directed instruction?			
Does teacher's lesson plans indicate if students peer-mediated instruction will be used as another approach to increase opportunities to respond?			
Did teacher plan how to monitor students' performances during instructional time?			
Does teacher's lesson plans indicate how behavioral performance feedback will be provided to students… when students display positive behavior? when students display inappropriate behavior?			

Chaparro, E.A., Nese, R.N.T., & McIntosh, K. (2015). Examples of engaging instruction to increase equity in education. Retrieved from http://www.pbis.org/Common/Cms/files/pbisresources/Engaging%20Instruction%20to%20Increase%20Equity%20in%20Education.pdf

Appendix E: Definitions of Pedagogical Terminology

Term	Definition
1-to-1 Technology District	Each student in the district is provided with a personal computing device (i.e., tablet or laptop) for use during the school day
2 Stars and a Wish	Feedback strategy: Provides immediate feedback to students. After students complete assignments, work is traded with a classmate (paired or small group) for constructive criticism and immediate feedback. Each student will read the other student's work and record two stars (things that he or she liked that the student did well) and one wish (something that the student could improve or change, beginning with I wish…).
Activation Strategy	Active learning strategy; Teaching strategies that prepare students for learning by activating ideas about prior knowledge, forth-coming learning experience, and required vocabulary, e.g., activation strategies include Think-Pair-Share, Two Minute Talks, KWL, Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down, etc.
Anchor Charts	Lesson reinforcement strategy: A tool used for supporting instruction and behavioral management by reminding students of expectations and routines. The teacher creates the chart during instruction and posts it in classroom.
Anticipation Guides	Prompting strategy: Students are asked to document their thoughts/opinions about ideas/concepts before they learn about them in a unit of study.
Behavior Chart	A system for promoting positive reinforcement-chart illustrates specific expected behavior
CANVAS	A cloud-based learning management system (LMS) designed for K-12 teachers and students that connects all digital tools and resources used by teachers into one place.
Center Activities	Differential instruction strategy: Different learning centers provide multiple ways to learn and understand concepts
Choral Reading	Active learning strategy: All students in a class respond in unison to a teacher question
Chunking	Memory strategy: Learning information is grouped in small units by teacher so it can be processed easier by students
Close Reading Passages	*Comprehension strategy - Close reading is thoughtful, critical analysis, disciplined reading of text.* Close reading includes: • Using short passages and excerpts • Diving right into the text with limited pre-reading activities • Focusing on the text itself • Re-reading deliberately • Reading with a pencil • Noticing things that are confusing • Discussing the text with others (Think-Pair Share or Turn and Talk frequently) among small groups or whole class • Responding to text-dependent questions
Collab Class	Active learning strategy: Collaborative Classroom is a learning environment in which social development and collaboration are infused into academics where students develop skills to think, talk, and share ideas in between two students or within a larger

	group. Collaborative learning approaches consist of cooperative learning, problem-centered instruction, peer teaching, etc.
Cornell Notes	Summarization/comprehension strategy used to help students take organized notes from text, using a Cornell template. 1. Cornell notes are divided into three sections. Students will individually determine which details are important to them and record in largest section. 2. Student will review and clarify notes, pull out main ideas and place subheadings in smaller section on left. 3. Students will then write summary in section on bottom of paper. -or- Review subheadings and notes as a group and write aloud a summary at bottom of paper. Use the same strategies noted above in the written summary section. 4. Finally, study subheadings and summary.
GoGuardians	Interactive digital learning strategy: Teacher use a Chrome book-based application (via internet) to engage with students and provide access to resources. Students interact via wireless devices (i.e., tablets, laptops).
Google Classroom	Organizational strategy: A workflow management system used by teachers and students to organize assignments and class content into one online space.
Guided Notes	Note taking strategy to encourage student engagement participation: Teacher prepares hand-outs that outline or map lectures, but leave blank space for key concepts, definitions, facts, etc. During the lecture, students fill in blanks with lesson content.
Hand Signals	Activation/Monitoring strategy: For active learning in a large group setting. Hand signals are used to indicate or rate students' understanding of lesson content, e.g., students show 5 fingers to indicate maximum understanding or 1 finger to indicate minimal understanding.
Kahoot	Monitoring strategy: A game based response system (phone app) which allows students to answer questions in a fast-paced setting, providing timed responses and rankings. The aim is to get the best score and time. Teacher has access to real time data.
KWL	Activation strategy: This technique combines students' prior knowledge with their desire to learn more, and conclusions of what they learned. Students brainstorm what they know (**K**), document what they want to know (**W**), and record that they learned (**L**).
Levels of Behavior Performance Feedback	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior based on behavior scale.
Message Boards	Monitoring strategy using active learning: Whiteboards are used by students to indicate response to a question/problem posed by teacher during whole group instruction. Teacher can check student understanding as whole group or individually.
Nearpod	Interactive digital learning strategy: Teacher constructs lesson presentation via website to deliver instruction to students by pushing out content via multiple devices at once. Students follow along via wireless devices (i.e., tablets, laptops).

P4 5 Finger Strategy	Monitoring strategies for active learning, using hand signals in a large group setting to indicate or rate students' understanding of lesson content, students show 5 fingers to indicate maximum understanding or 1 finger to indicate minimal understanding.
Pair Share	Collaboration/Activation strategy: Teacher poses a question to students, ask them to take a few minutes of thinking time and then turn to a neighbor to share their thoughts
Parking Lot Questions	Classroom management strategy: Teacher provides a space (i.e., on board) for students to anonymously ask questions/write ideas about a topic. So-called because in essence students park their insights (i.e., questions, "aha" moments, etc.)
PAWS Behavior (P 3)	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior. Chart on wall illustrates behavior expectations for students. A visual reference used by teacher to reinforce expected behaviors.
Points	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior and/or student engagement. A student can earn points for behaving appropriately or other activity that deserves a reward
REMIND	A text messaging app used to help teachers, students, and parents communicate quickly and efficiently. Messages are sent in real time to an entire class, small group, or one individual.
Response Cards	Monitoring/Activation strategy using active learning: Index cards, whiteboards, or other objects are held up simultaneously by all students to indicate response to a question/problem posed by teacher during whole group instruction
School Bucks	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior and/or student engagement. A student can earn bucks for behaving appropriately or other activity that deserves a reward. The bucks can be cashed in for treats or special privileges.
Share Out	Collaboration strategy: Teacher poses a question to students, allows them to take a few minutes of thinking time and then turn to a neighbor to share their thoughts
Shoulder Buddy	Collaboration/Activation strategy (small group): At table, student works with the person next to him/her
Stickers	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior and/or student engagement. A student can earn stickers for behaving appropriately or other activity that deserves a reward. Sticker may be place on classwork/desk or in album/agenda
Student Agenda	Prompting strategy used by students as a planner
Target Boards	Monitoring strategy using active learning: Teacher asks questions and students indicate answer on target board. The board has answer choices student can select from.
Think/Pair/Share	Collaboration/Activation strategy: Teacher poses a question to students, allows them to take a few minutes of thinking time and then turn to a neighbor to share their thoughts
Thumb Checks	Activation/Monitoring strategy: Using hand signal to check student understanding. Also displays active learning. Thumb up=understand/agree, Thumb down= don't understand/don't agree. Can be used in large group.
Ticket out the Door	Reflection strategy: students write one or two things they learned on their tickets, or answer an interesting question related to the day's learning. Student must give their ticket to the teacher in order to leave the room/exit.

Tiger Bucks	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior and/or student engagement. A student can earn bucks for behaving appropriately or other activity that deserves a reward. The bucks can be cashed in for treats or special privileges.
Token Economy	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior and/or student engagement. A student can earn bucks for behaving appropriately or other activity that deserves a reward. The bucks can be cashed in for treats or special privileges.
Treasure Chest	Monitoring strategy for managing behavior and/or student engagement. After earning a specified amount of points/bucks, student can select gift from treasure chest for behaving appropriately or other activity that deserves a reward

Appendix F: A priori code assignments based on constructs from PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports – OSEP Technical Assistance Center, 2019: Simonsen, et al., 2015)

A priori Code	Definition
Modeling	Indicates how teachers used instructional strategies to clarify teaching objectives and learning expectations
Prompting	Indicates how: teachers provided opportunities for students to respond; teacher organized and managed small groups of students, while working on group assignments;
Monitoring	Indicates how teachers visually scanned students; physically moved about in the classroom; and interacted with students via verbal or non-verbal communication
Reinforcing	Indicates how: teachers provided performance feedback; made students aware of their progress; offered students chances to make corrections; and reviewed expectations

Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports – OSEP Technical Assistance Center. (2019). What is school-wide PBIS. Retrieved from https://www.pbis.org/school

Simonsen, B., Freeman, J., Goodman, S., Mitchell, B., Swain-Bradway, J., Sugai, G., George, H., & Putnam, B. (2015). Brief on classroom PBIS strategies. Retrieved from https://www.pbis.org/Common/Cms/files/pbisresources/CWPBIS%20Technical%20Brief%20Final%201.30.15.docx

Appendix G: Sample of a priori codes assigned to interview response data

Modeling	Prompting	Monitoring	Reinforcing	Interviewee & Grade level
Additional references Real world connections Student interest Scaffolding	Discovery activities Shoulder buddy Interactive lessons	Formative evaluations Student questioning Teacher led questioning Student responses during peer discussions Response cards	Immediate feedback Ticket out the door High fives Verbal Praise Redirect student thinking	P1 1st grade
Anchor charts Current events Review Real life experiences Scaffolding	Anticipation guides Video clips Q&A Field trips Virtual field trips Differentiation Peer tutoring Peer mediated instruction Modified assignments	Student responses during class discussions Journal reflections Parking lot questions Teacher led questioning Quick checks on written assignments Response cards Hand signals Completed class work	Excitement in tone of voice Verbal praise Compliments School bucks Treats Immediate feedback Peer assistance Teacher directed	P2 2nd grade
Current events Social media Real life experiences Story telling	Cooperative learning Open-ended questioning Higher order thinking Close proximity Team work Peer tutoring	Student led Q & A Open ended questioning	Student responses Immediate feedback Compliments Encouragement	P3 4th grade
Scaffolding Real life experiences Vocabulary introduction Pre-test Facilitate	Think and respond Peer mediated instruction Differentiated instruction	Whole class student sharing Student led questioning Five finger strategy Thumbs Up Teacher led/guided questioning Observations	Praise Excited tone of voice Body language Peer assistance Challenge deeper thinking	P4 5th grade
Review Real life experiences Preview	Assign pre-reading Teacher set student learning expectations Teacher led test prep	Pre-evaluation Observation Summative assessments	Teacher led test prep Teacher displayed enthusiasm Repeat question	P5 5th grade

concepts	Peer-mediated instruction Teacher-led instruction Group work Differentiated instruction	Individual responses Choral responses Participation credit	Review Questioning and test taking strategies Teacher led test prep	
Real world examples Scaffolding	Differentiated instruction Technology (personal phones) Close proximity Peer instruction Peer collaboration	Formative assessments Observation	Encouragement Redirect thinking	P6 3rd grade
Review guide Multiple learning modalities Teacher reflection	Group work Differentiated instruction Pair/share Close proximity Peer mediated instruction	Teacher led questioning Hand signals Written responses Observation	Immediate feedback Encouragement Excitement Partner review Whole class review	P7 4th grade
Review Real world experiences Preview Mini lessons	Peer/pair share Close proximity Shoulder buddy	Formative assessments Student responses during whole group instruction Observation Thumbs check Ticket out the door	Teacher displayed enthusiasm Provide guidance Encouragement Peer assistance One-on-one assistance	P8 4th grade
Review Examples Scaffolding	Special assignments Close proximity Group assignments Peer mediated instruction Differentiated instruction	Students sharing knowledge with class Teacher led questioning Student responses in small groups Response signals (head nod, thumbs up)	Encouragement Challenge-dig deeper Peer assistance Provide hints Re-teach	P9 1st grade
Game-Review Real world experiences Online resource References Review standards	Shoulder buddy Collaborative grouping Teacher direction and redirection Peer mediated instruction Differentiated instruction Interdisciplinary	Pre-assessment Check point stickers Color coded popsicle sticks Class discussion Teacher questioning Student answering questions	Summarization using target boards Compliments High fives Encouragement: remind students they are HOT (Higher Order Thinkers) School bucks	P10 5th grade

	studies			
Review Real world experiences Re-teaching	Differentiated instruction Small group Collaborative platforms Peer mediated instruction Provide social learning opportunities Mixed ability grouping	Student responses in small group Q & A Teacher led questioning Checklist Response cards Computer polling programs: Kahoot, Nearpod, GoGuardian, Google Classroom	Test talks HOT-who agrees/who does not agree Positive voice tone Redirect student thinking Computer polling programs	P11 2nd grade
Examples Teacher led instruction Guided discussion	Compare/contrast Cooperative grouping Placing post-it notes on desk Close proximity Shoulder buddy	Teacher guided small group activities Guided discussion Student responses during teacher led questioning Walking about/observing Student generated questioning Individual student white boards Post it notes	Peer assistance Encouragement Immediate feedback (post-it notes on desk) Provide graded work at beginning of class Excited voice tone Redirect student thinking Students repeat teacher questions Rephrase questions	P12 3rd grade

Appendix H: Sample of a priori codes assigned to lesson plan data

Modeling	Prompting	Monitoring	Reinforcing	Interviewee & Grade level
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will work independently while teacher circulates throughout the classroom to assist students Provide teacher assistance to struggling students	Teacher will circulate throughout the classroom	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P1 1st grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will work independently while teacher circulates throughout the classroom to assist students Struggling students can work with a partner	Review student work to check for mastery of concepts	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P2 2nd grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will be engaged in class discussions Struggling students can work with a partner	Evaluate student participation during class discussions and written assignments	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P3 4th grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will be engaged in expert groups via a heterogeneous Jigsaw grouping technique Struggling students can work with a partner--peer-mediated instruction	Evaluate students based on participation during group work--Students will survey classmates' performance and participation	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P4 5th grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will work cooperatively to review, discuss, and compose quiz questions Struggling students can work with a	Evaluate students based on participation during group work--cooperatively developing quiz questions	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P5 5th grade

	partner--peer-mediated instruction			
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will work independently while teacher circulates throughout the classroom to assist students	Review student work to check for mastery of concepts	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P6 3rd grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will be engaged in class discussions Struggling students can work with a partner	Evaluate student participation during class discussions and written assignments	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P7 4th grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will be engaged in class discussions Struggling students can work with a partner	Evaluate student participation during class discussions and written assignments	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P8 4th grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will work independently while teacher circulates throughout the classroom to assist students Provide teacher assistance to struggling students	Teacher will circulate throughout the classroom	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P9 1st grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will be engaged in class discussions Use guided notes to direct student engagement Struggling students can work with a partner--peer-mediated instruction	Evaluate student participation during class discussions and written assignments Review students' guided notes	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P10 5th grade
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will work independently while teacher circulates throughout the classroom to assist students Struggling students	Review student work to check for mastery of concepts	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P11 2nd grade

	can work with a partner			
No details of modeling strategies were written in plans	Students will be engaged in class discussions Struggling students can work with a partner--cooperative grouping	Evaluate student participation during class discussions and written assignments Review students' guided notes	No details of strategies for reinforcing learning were written in plans	P12 3rd grade

Appendix I: Open Codes Sample

Open Codes

Open Codes: words/phrases	Participant Code	Example	Data Source
Peer tutoring	P11	Mentioned utilizing students as tutors	Interview
Student partner	P11	Struggling students can work with a partner	Lesson plans
Student helpers	P3	Fifth graders tutor first graders via Peer Leader Group	Interview
Struggling student	P3	Struggling students can work with a partner	Interview
Peer-mediated instruction	P4	Gifted students tutored students	Interview
Collaboration	P4	Peer-mediated instruction	Lesson plans
Cooperative learning	P3	Use cooperative learning--students work together to discover answers	Interview
Facilitators	P3	Students-engaged in class discussions	Lesson plans
Peer language	P6	Shared how students can be effective, as well as efficient, as facilitators because they can sometimes accomplish what teachers cannot because "peers speak peer language."	Interview
	P4	"I serve more as a facilitator"	Interview
Pairing students	P3	P3 shared how she paired higher ability students with lower ability students to work on assignments as teams during class.	Interview
Grouping	P3	Pair struggling student with partner	Lesson plans
Differentiated instruction	P7	Students share with the group what they know.	Interview
Mixed abilities	P6	Students with background knowledge pair with students who lack background knowledge and share what they know	Interview
Supportive	P8	Commented, "I want my fourth-grade students to feel that I am supportive and that I believe that they can be successful."	Interview
Show care			Interview
Student assistance	P6	Students with background knowledge pair with students who lack background knowledge and share what they know	Lesson plans
			Lesson plans
	P2	Review student work with student for mastery of concepts	Interview
Teacher assistance	P1	Teacher circulates throughout the classroom to assist students	Lesson plans
	P1	One-on-one communication with students	Interview
	P3	Provide teacher assistance to struggling students	Lesson plans
	P3	Immediate feedback	Interview
Immediate feedback		Evaluate student participation during class discussions and written assignments	Lesson plans
	P7	Encourage students to get back on task when off-task	Interview
	P4	Evaluate students based on participation during group work	Lesson plans
Encouragement			

Compliments	P9	Acknowledged reinforcing her student behaviors with compliments to minimize misbehavior.	Interview
Acknowledge			
Verbal praise	P10	Verbal praise	Interview
Expectations	P12	Acknowledged using a behavior rubric that provided students with a list of her expectations for positive behavior.	Interview
Encouragement	P11	Students encouraged	Interview
Equitable treatment	P11	Provides equitable responses to all student group… handles each case using the same steps	Interview
Fairness	P10	Non-judgment room	Interview
Non-judgment			Interview
Engaging activities	P7	Used simple activities engaged students	Interview
	P6	Videos, virtual learning	Interview
Videos	P10	Uses engaging activities	Interview
Games		Utilizes vocabulary games with mixed media	Interview
Computer applications	P5	Uses different methods within my instruction	Interview
Visuals, charts, diagrams			
Mobility	P6	Uses "every bit of the square footage"	Interview
Close proximity	P1	Close proximity to students	Interview
	P1	Circulate during student activities	Lesson plans
Circulate throughout	P3	Walking constantly throughout classroom	Interview
Walks around			
Differentiate instruction	P4	Proclaimed she takes into account that all students do not learn the in the same way…use of three learning modalities per lessons	Interview
Learning modalities	P4	Students survey classmates' performance and participation	Lesson plan
Scaffold instruction	P2	Scaffold instruction for students Differentiated instruction	Interview
Group activities	P5	Small group activities to address individual learning needs	Interview
	P11	Use multiple learning modalities to address visual, auditory, and tactile learning styles	Lesson plan
Individual learning needs	P1	Augmented lessons with videos, realistic fiction, non-fiction stories	Interview
Augment lessons	P10	Plan some lessons to appeal to student interest areas Uses additional online resources and videos	Lesson plan Interview
Address student interest			
Positive affirmation	P1	Engaged her students with verbal praise, school bucks, stickers, and small treats	Interview
Praise	P2	Teacher affection and respect	Interview
Stickers		encourage students to emulate	
Encouragement	P10	High fiver	Interview
Enthusiasm	P5	Shows enthusiasm	Interview
	P12	Complimentary	Interview

Appendix J: Number of interview and lesson plan data categorized using A priori codes

A priori coded data	Modeling	Prompting	Monitoring	Reinforcing
IQ 1-11: facilitating instruction	50	47	38	45
IQ 12-15: engaging students	9	5	13	68
Total	59	62	51	117

Appendix K: Theme Development Table

Themes	Concepts/Patterns Within Themes	Number of Open Codes Used to Determine Concepts
Peer Mediated Instruction	Students as Tutors Student Collaboration Students Sharing Work	123
Teacher-Student Relationships	Maximizing Student Success Minimizing Student Misbehavior	163
Positive Reinforcement	Expected Behaviors Equitable Treatment of Misconduct	88
Optimize Student Learning	Engaging Activities Teacher Mobility Differentiation Praise and Prizes	262