

# Integrating Academic and Behavior Supports Within an RTI Framework

April 25, 2012 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

## About this Talk

THE TALK IS CONCLUDED.

SCROLL BELOW FOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

**Please take a few moments at the completion of this event to give us your feedback by taking our [survey](#)!**

Increasingly, schools are faced with challenges stemming from the intensity and scope of student needs in their settings. With each scientifically based response to these needs come separate data systems, treatment protocols, teams, and interventions. Because of this, a major consideration for schools is to ensure that teams work smarter, not just harder.

Join Hank Bohanon and Steve Goodman for our next RTI Talk as they answer your questions about the components of a well-designed, integrated model of academic and behavior supports (systems, practices, and data) and offer specific tips on establishing a school-wide system of tiered supports that improves student outcomes and helps prevent school failure.

Read more about [Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.](#), and [Steve Goodman, Ph.D.](#)

## Transcript



**Meg Bragg**

Tiered support...What does a team do when they have exhausted interventions, brought the student through the CSE system, and the student does not meet the criteria (in the eyes of the CSE due to money and cutbacks)? The behaviors are hampering the academics of the student as well as others around him/her. We have data...plans...months of plans and teacher support. Where do we go next?



**Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

I am not sure I know what CSE refers to? If it is a team approach to providing intensive supports, then here are a few thoughts. This is a very difficult situation that requires much information regarding the student, staff, and organizational environment. Given my lack of knowledge of the situation, we'll look at a few variables around why an intervention might not be successful. First, is the intervention specific matched to the problem of the student (e.g., are you confident that a functional assessment identified the student and environmental variables that contribute to the problem, considering both academic and behavior skill deficits)? Has the functional assessment

**A** linked intervention been implemented correctly (with fidelity)? Was there a skill development component embedded within the intervention? Were adequate skilled personnel, intervention time, and resources provided to ensure the student would have success? Was student progress monitored so that the intervention can be modified/improved to adjust to student need? If the above components are not available or inadequate, then we would look at how additional resources can be accessed through collaboration with other organizations (e.g., wrap around approach).

**Q** **Anne Juola-Rushton**

Since we know that integration of academics and behavior is important to meet the needs of the whole child, why does the PBS Project pull away from the integration of PBS within the problem solving model of MTSS?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

I know that issues around integration of PBS and academics may vary by school, district, or state. However, there are increasing attempts at integrating academic and behavior support models. Over the last few years, there have been strands/multiple presentations on this topic at the PBIS National forum and also the Association for Positive Behavior Support Annual Convention. Many state have adopted a priority to integrate behavior and academics in a MTSS model (e.g., Michigan, Florida).

**Q** **Tutsy Asmus**

I would like a specific protocol for a research-based behavior management and data collection plan. Is there anything you can suggest?

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

I have found several tools that have been helpful in the process. For students who have more low incidence disabilities, Rob O'Neill and his colleagues created a very helpful process for data collection (e.g., direct observation and interviews) and plan development (e.g., behavioral pathways). In particular, I find the Functional Assessment Observation form in this guide to be very useful. It provides scatter plot information along with other data on antecedents, behavior, and outcomes that are supporting the behavior. The guide provides very useful examples for how to complete the form. Also, this is one of the most useful explanations of the behavioral pathway for behavior support planning. What is most useful about this process is that the summary of the functional behavioral assessment (FBA), information about replacement behaviors, and interventions that are aligned with the pathway can be described on in one place. This is the reference for that guide: O'Neill, R., Horner, R., Albin, R. W., Storey, K., & Sprague, J. R. (1996). [Functional Assessment and Program Development for Problem Behavior: A Practical Handbook](#). Wadsworth Publishing. Another example of a very useful FBA interview guide is the Functional Assessment Checklist for Teacher (FACTS) available at [the OSEP Center for Technical Assistance on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports](#) (found under Tier 2 and Tier 3 Level Evaluation

**A** Tools). This section of the website also includes self-assessments and other planning tools around behavior support (e.g., Behavior Support Team Planning Template). What is most helpful about this site is that it provides tools to help teams to determine if they have adequate systems capacity (e.g., time to meet) and data to evaluate the progress of students, before they set up their practices (e.g., FBAs). A newer tool that I have just begun to use is: Dunlap, G., Iovannone, R., Kincaid, D., Wilson, K., Christiansen, K., Strain, P., & English, C. (2010). [Prevent-Teach-Reinforce: The School-Based Model of Individualized Positive Behavior Support](#). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes. This guide provides a very practical process to determining needs of students (and settings) and developing support plans. It includes inventories for teachers to complete to determine their approaches to working with others. Further, the interventions are linked directly to the behavioral pathway. A companion text I use with the book that provides helpful information on the FBA and behavior intervention planning (BIP) is: Chandler, L. K., & Dahlquist, C. M. (2010). [Functional Assessment: Strategies to Prevent and Remediate Challenging Behavior in School Settings \(3rd Edition\)](#). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall. This book has extremely useful examples and interventions that can be useful in your work.

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**  
One additional resource that we have found useful is Crone, D. A. and Horner, R. H. (2003). [Building positive behavior support systems in schools: Functional behavioral assessment](#). New York: Guilford Press.

**Q** **Debbie Steel**  
What are some specific strategies that you suggest to use that incorporate academic and behavior intervention for teachers to use with students? Also, are you aware of any resources on this topic?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**  
At a universal level, we want to make sure that teachers provide a core program in academics AND behavior that will meet the needs of most students. This would involve evidence that the program has been successful for students like those in the teacher's classroom. Careful consideration is given to providing adequate time to teach with multiple learning opportunities. The emphasis is on prevention of academic and behavior problems. For students who need support in addition to the core, we need to consider the relationship of behavior and academics. If a student engages in problem behavior to escape an academic task because he/she cannot perform the task successfully, then the focus would be on developing the specific academic skill deficit. For example, a student may become argumentative when asked to read out loud. The conflict escalates until the student is removed from the setting or the teacher removes the task from the student. Further investigation may show that the student has difficulty with word attack skills. In this situation, there is a dangerous cycle where the student engages in disruptive behavior due to a skill deficit and this behavior results in less instructional time to remediate the academic skills deficit. In this illustration, there is a need for explicit instruction in decoding and word attack skills. Dr. Dawn Miller and her colleagues from Shawnee Mission School District in Kansas, have created a document that matches function of student problem behavior to academic intervention (e.g., students who engage in attention seeking behavior from peers may benefit from peer assisted

**A** learning programs). A nice resource for developing intensive supports is Witt, Daly, & Noell book [Functional Assessments: A Step-by-Step Guide to Solving Academic and Behavior Problems](#).

**Q** **Lindsay Parker**

How do you see this multi-tiered system of supports working out in the private school arena? Do you have any specific tips as to how to make implementation work successfully in a private school? Do you have any examples of private schools that have embedded this model into their structure?

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

Additionally, the Center for Catholic School Effectiveness has several resources related to the critical features described by Sugai (2008). This [link to a list of presentations and handouts](#) provides access to presentations, examples, and other handouts related to effective instruction for Catholic schools. These include information on applying Rtl and effective instruction. Additionally, they provide [curriculum templates for developing effective core instruction for all students](#). Recently, there has been the development of [common core standards for Catholic School settings](#) as well. Many of these resources have portability across all settings, including other types of private schools. This center also have a presence on LinkedIn.

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

The key to successful implementation is based on two levels. The first involves an understanding of the key components of multi-tiered system of supports that define the framework and are applied to multiple settings and populations. Sugai (2008) identified these features as (1) Universal screening, (2) Data-based decision making and problem solving, (3) Continuous progress monitoring, (4) Student performance, and (5) Continuum of evidence-based intervention. The second level of successful implementation is the extent to which the larger systems can support staff in the fidelity implementation of these practices that will endure over time. We look at the capacity of the organization to support staff skill development through coaching, training, technical assistance and evaluation. How each of these levels are operationalized will depend on the unique features of the school such as availability of resources, experience/skill set of staff, leadership priorities and school culture.

**Q** **James Langholz**

What is the best way to document interventions for child suspected of having ADHD? Our RTI database is for academic (SLD) and behavior (EBD) plans only.

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

What Steve said about the connection between data and interventions is really critical. The [Prevent, Teach, Reinforce guide](#) mentioned in the response to Tutsy Asmus is very helpful. It provides intervention development documentation, fidelity of intervention tracking, and behavioral rating scales that are designed to be socially acceptable to teachers. Further, the [Chandler text](#) mentioned provides very helpful sections on interventions for students with sensory issues (e.g., under stimulated, over stimulated). I would highly recommend this text for a list of practical

**A** suggestions once you determine that sensory issues may be a part of what is supporting the problem for the student. Also, the [School-Wide Information System](#) has information on their website about progress monitoring students at the individual level and for students on the check in/check out process.

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

The suggestions that I would provide would be to document student need based on assessments and the clear connection to intervention based on the student need. I would suggest describing how the intervention should be implemented in the correct manner and provide data to show how the intervention was actually implemented (to focus on implementation fidelity). Finally, I would collect student progress monitoring information and graph the data to show student progress. If the student is not making adequate progress, then I would want to gather additional information for intervention problem solving (e.g., is it too hard to implement, student has deficit in pre-requisite skills that need to be address). I would document modifications to the intervention and collect data on student progress with the new intervention.

**Q** **Matin Adegboyega**

How does the RTI contribute to success for all students in this era of Common Core State Standards and the anticipated common assessments in 2014/2015?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

According to the [Common Core State Standards Initiative website](#), the Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. I see the Common Core State Standards impacting Rtl in two major ways. First, the curriculum needs to be aligned with the standards order for students to successfully meet the standards. This alignment is within and across the grade levels. Secondly, practices will need to be evaluated to ensure that given an aligned curriculum, students will have access to instructional practices that promote success towards the standards. Implementation of Response to Intervention will help in data-based decision making to improve the curriculum and instructional practices to best fit the needs of the students.

**Q** **Shelly James**

Our school is considered a success story for its implementation of multi-tier systems of support for behavior, however, due to its size, the behavior coach is also the counselor and wears many other "hats"...How do I prevent burnout? There never seems to be enough time to implement, let alone evaluate what needs to be done!

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

This is a very important concern. We find that unless schools make room for the implementation of Rtl, there will frustration and degradation in the Rtl process and outcomes. To address this, we

**A** have been working with the larger system (e.g., school district) to help allocate implementation supports that will endure over time. The implementation supports from the district involve identifying priorities, providing political and resource support. We also work with both the district and school to develop local capacity so that there is more than one staff person who can develop skill sets and contribute to the implementation of RtI. This is important not also for sharing the workload but also in developing for ?back-up? when there is staff turnover.

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

Steve is right, this is one of the most important areas to work on prior to rolling out practices. One of the places we like to start is with resource mapping at the school level. George Sugai refers to this as Working Smarter. The first step is to have the team identify what they are doing at each tier of support using [a blank triangle](#). This is very useful when teams present back what they are doing with their entire staff. Many times, schools have not seen all of their interventions in one place. Next, we complete a [matrix](#) for every item listed on the visual document. Teams are asked to review each intervention based on its connection with the school improvement plan (SIP), and identify key personnel for each group. This is an opportunity for teams to consider why that doing each intervention, and try to remove tasks that are not linked to data, evidence-based practices, or the SIP. When teams do this, I like to color code each team member. This allows the teams (especially the administrator) to see the division of labor. Before adding more work to people who are already taxed, the team must decide what will be removed. Marla Israel offers a suggestion for identifying new team members. She calls it ?[Who you gonna call](#).? Each person on the team is charged with identifying three people that could replace them in some capacity. Finally, for larger schools, identifying committees to support efforts can be helpful. For example, you may have a Chairperson for data who makes sure meetings do not occur without data. This person should have one to three people who can help them (on committee) to prepare the data, but they may not attend the meeting. This allows leaders to distribute some tasks when possible. You can watch the [Healthy Teams recording of a team working on the working smarter process](#). The audio is not the best, but it does provide some examples. Also, you fast forward to parts that are more helpful to you.

**Q** **Shelly James**

More and more I am finding that little parental support equals academic and behavioral problems with Tier 3 students. Despite, repeated attempts to involve the parents, there continues to be resistance. In fact when interventions have been planned and implemented, these parents usually run and leave our school! Any ideas how to combat parent apathy?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

I agree, family involvement plays a crucial role in creating a successful school program. In my experiences, I believe that people are really doing the best they can given their environments and their skill sets. Given that circumstances vary across situations, I would focus on a few main ideas. First, I would work to ensure that the school environment is proactive in developing positive relationships. Sometimes families have had experiences of negative interactions with schools either through the current student or through past history. Setting the stage for positive

**A** relationships when times are good will go along way when interacting during difficult times. Second, clarify what the student needs to be successful (this should be a collaborative process with the parent/family). When the needs are clarified, it might be helpful to discuss the current parameters that people from school/home are operating in trying to meet these needs (e.g., challenges in time, communication, ability). Problem solving takes place at addressing these challenges. Identifying involvement opportunities in specific and ?doable? terms helps in this process, especially when the opportunities are linked to priorities or values. Third, get help from others. Are there parents within the school or district that might be available as a resource to families in problem solving around communication or involvement issues?

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

I would agree with Steve. What I find in many plans is that a lack of buy in from the beginning and surprise can be two reasons why collaborative problem solving can be problematic. As Micheal Fullan has stated, people own what they create. If parents are included in the beginning of the plan, then they should be more willing to participate in the process. In some cases, the behavior plan is simply presented to the parent, without any opportunity for input prior to the meeting. At a minimum, conducting an FBA interview with the parent/guardian (using one of the tools mentioned in the response to Tutsy Asmus) can be helpful in getting their perspective. This information is also helpful to the team in determining settings events for the behavior. Someone from the school also should contact the parent before the meeting so they know the purpose of meeting as well and see if the parent has any questions that need to be addressed. This prevents surprises for everyone. Sue Hans, the Parent Mentor the North Suburban Special Education District, explains that she encourages working out issues with parents in a collaborative way by finding out why parents/teachers have certain concerns. These concerns are usually based on what they really want for the child. For example, a parent may think the only solution for their child is to move them to a more restrictive environment. When pressed a little deeper, you find that the parent really wants more structure (e.g., schedules, feedback) that could be provided in a less restrictive setting. She recommends several resources to help staff and parents develop these negotiations skills sets. [Collaborative Problem Solving and Dispute Resolution in Special Education](#) by Ron Windle, Ph.D. and Suzanne Warren, M.S. and [Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In](#) by Roger Fisher and William Ury. [National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs ? An implementation Guide for School Communities](#). Published by National PTA. [Educating our Children Together: A Sourcebook for Effective Family-School-Community Partnerships](#). Available online free of charge from CADRE (Consortium for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Special Education) School, Family and Community Partnerships, by Joyce Epstein, Mavis Sanders, et. al. Third Edition.

**Q** **Jennifer Snow**

I am curious to know how a district might go about merging PBIS efforts with RTI - are there specific steps or rubrics we could follow to effectively integrate the two?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

I would suggest that you first identify and agree on the key features of PBIS and Rtl. George Sugai provides a nice article describing the features of [School-Wide Positive Behavior Support and](#)

**A** [Response to Intervention](#) on the RTI Action Network website. I would then work to get political support from your leadership in moving forward in an integrated model (explaining the similarities of the behavior and academic MTSS approach, how both are necessary for student success, and how an integrated model be a more efficient use of resources). Next, I would look the current resources used in addressing academic and/or PBIS Rtl efforts. The purpose of this process would be to look at what resources can be combined or leveraged in an integrated model. I would then work on the infrastructure needs to implement an integrated model with fidelity. This work would focus on providing the materials, information, coaching, training, technical expertise, and evaluation.

**Q** *Janice S.*

I saw the film "Bully" and was uncomfortable because I realized I had had some of the same responses to bullying as the assistant principals shown in the film. Bullying seems to be an intractable problem at my middle school. Is there anything we can do to improve the school culture and lessen the problem?

**A** *Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.*

Steve framed the response very well. There is one at least one additional resource related to bullying prevention available from the [National Center on Learning Disabilities](#), which includes access to a toolkit.

**A** *Steve Goodman, Ph.D.*

Within the schoolwide PBIS model, we work to ensure that all students within the school develop a common culture--meaning shared expectations, experiences and language. All students would understand the behavior expectations (for example, be safe, be respectful, be ready to learn). In bullying prevention, students and staff would understand how the bully prevention fits into schoolwide PBIS. Students understand what the expectations are (e.g., be respectful) and that engaging in the behavioral expectations is incompatible with bullying behavior. Appropriate responses are taught and encouraged to those involved when bullying takes place. The student being bullied is taught to communicate to the bully to ?stop? the behavior. If the behavior continues, then the student being bullied talks to an adult. The student engaging in bullying behavior is taught what it means to stop when asked. Student bystanders are taught how to not give further attention to the student bullying and how to help remove the student being bullied from the situation. The adults are taught how to respond the situation. There are two manuals (one for elementary and one for middle school level) that can be downloaded for free from [PBIS.org](#). The manuals discuss these procedures within a schoolwide model.

**Q** *Marlea Linse*

What recommendations do you have for institutions of higher learning in terms of preparing students in education programs? What do teachers who have been well prepared do when they student teach and take their first position and the school is not implementing RTI?



**A Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

I would think it helpful for preservice teachers to understand the key components of implementing RtI. If students are fluent in these key components, then the flexibility in implementing across diverse settings can be emphasized. For example, implementation in large urban schools may look different than smaller suburban settings or rural settings but the critical features remain the same. I also think that another valuable skill set might focus on the variables needed to implement programs well (such as leadership, guidance, access to materials, coaching, training, technical expertise, evaluation). Then, if a new teacher is placed in a setting where these variables are present, the teacher is better able to articulate the supports needed to be successful.

**A Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

This is a very important question. As mentioned by Steve, making sure our future teachers are prepared in terms of concepts behind RtI is critical. While I think this is important for future special education teachers, it is extremely important to work with general education future teachers on these concepts. We do not have this down perfectly at our institution, but we are working on it. For example, students take the exceptional child (the introduction course on exceptionality) along with introduction to reading and classroom management. As the instructor for this course on exceptionality, I must make sure I understand the concepts of the other classes. The reading class is designed around the recommendations of the National Reading Panel and RtI. The classroom management class uses texts from [CHAMPS curriculum](#) and [positive behavior support](#), while my class focuses on [Universal Design for Learning](#) (UDL) and positive behavior support. The students start with our classes for five weeks and then they are onsite in settings that are implementing PBS/RtI. While they are on site, they are collecting data about student needs, receiving coaching from instructors, and teaching lessons on social studies and literacy. These lessons include components of UDL to make sure they are accessible for all students and that they are aligned to the common core. These students also have to implement [components of effective classroom management](#) while they are teaching. Students have other experiences as they move through their program related to math and RtI, but we are working on including more of these experiences across the curriculum. Our program is in the process of redesigning our teaching based on the outcomes we agree are important for our students within an RtI/MTSS approach. We have found that the [Understanding by Design](#) approach to be very helpful as we work out our next steps.

**Q D. Morris**

Who should conduct the functional behavior analysis when students aren't responding to Tier 1 and 2 supports? Does the teacher gather the data or should the school psychologist observe the student in the classroom?

**A Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

I look at conducting functional assessments along a continuum. The more severe the problem with risk to self, others, or the educational environment; the more confident I would like to be in the validity of the functional assessment. This would mean that the most experienced and skilled (in functional assessments) staff would lead an assessment team. Other members of the functional assessment/intervention planning would include family, other teachers (those who know the

**A** student), and input from the student as well. Information is gathered from several sources to compare and validate a hypothesis based on the functional assessment. When the problem is less intense, poses less risk, then teacher observation may be sufficient. More severe behavior will require more investment into conducting the functional assessment. Within our project, we look at developing a continuum of skill sets to address problem behavior. All staff within the school should have a basic understanding of what is meant by 'function of behavior,' how to access help for a student experiencing behavioral difficulties. We try to develop local, school-based individuals with skills in address common problems that might arise in the school setting so that they can lead a team through the functional assessment and behavior plan development/implementation. We also try to develop district behavioral expertise to provide assistance to the school teams for more difficult cases.

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

I agree with Steve on his points. One thing to think about is that functional behavior analysis and functional behavior assessment are related, but not the same. In the former, you are typically trying to trigger the behavior get a better understanding of the purpose of the behavior. This should be done by someone with a great deal of training and expertise. Have a team based approach is critical to the success of the process (Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2007). You need to have people on this team who have knowledge of behavior support. This can include school psychologists, special education teachers, counselors, etc. I have seen several approaches to this process. I find that an interview (see tools mentioned in the response to Tutsy Asmus) is very helpful. Further, a review of the student's records is important at this point to determine if what has been tried, and see other possible quality of life issues. Finally, I really appreciate the use of ABC recording before I start with more formal data collection. This process allows me (and whoever has been charged with the task who has the expertise) to define the behavior, determine possible antecedents and consequences. Most importantly, it allows me the opportunity to see if there are any classroom issues that should be addressed. The rating scales such as Prevent, Teach, and Reinforce (see Tutsy Asmus) are very helpful in that the teacher can provide data in a way that less intrusive. It allows provides data on the teacher's perception of the impact of the behavior. That is usually what is causing the referral, so it is helpful to have a measure of this. This is a very helpful article about involving teachers in the FBA process Scott, T. M., Bucalos, A., Liaupsin, C., Nelson, C. M. (2004). Using Functional Behavior Assessment in General Education Settings: Making a case for effectiveness? and efficiency. Behavioral Disorders; 29, 2, 189-201. (E-Journal)

**Q** **Bob Greenfield**

Absenteeism is a chronic problem. How can we get students to attend school regularly?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

Great question- we can not teach when students are not present in the educational environment. Like any complex issue, there are multiple contributing factors to absenteeism and addressing this involves multiple strategies. First, we work to create a culture of competence and success within the schools. All students need to understand what is expected. The educational environment is

**A** ?set up? to encourage students meeting these expectations through effective instruction and acknowledgement/feedback. An important component in develop a culture of competence is the involvement of students and the students? families to develop shared ownership in making the school environment successful. For some students, we need to conduct a functional assessment to see if missing school is related to avoiding academic staff (intervention would involve heavy emphasis to accelerating skills developing while adjusting curriculum/instruction to student success level). If missing school is due to avoidance of people (e.g., recipient of bullying behavior), then interventions would focus on the reducing the aversive situation. Additionally, there may be unique factors outside the school that lead to absenteeism (e.g., problems with transportation, waking up time time, student health) that may need to be addressed on an individual student basis.

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

There was a very good example of Santo Domingo School creating a welcoming environment to address this issue. The school worked on improving their overall schoolwide environment to encourage students to attend school. The report coding provides some helpful suggestions about how to address attendance issues collectively. The resource is available through the [Educational Resources Information Center \(ERIC\)](#).

**Q** **Ellie Johnson**

Our district is encouraging us to establish a multi-tier system of supports. They have given us the option to begin with either RTI or PBIS. For a school that is new to this, would you recommend starting with academics or behavior first?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

My first recommendation is to consider integrating behavior and academics through a leadership team from the beginning. This helps to address, from the beginning, why both are important and key to the school improvement process. On our website ([Michigan?s Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative \(MiBLSi\)](#)) we provide information on the importance of an integrated approach. However, I can understand the logic for starting out with more manageable components that will lead to an integrated approach. There are two considerations for deciding which way to start. These are need and likelihood of success. Staff will be more open to begin the initiative when they can see how this will benefit the success of their students. So, collect data on student outcomes and, if possible, collect information on how well staff are implementing the academic or behavior program currently in place (this may involve survey if you do not have formal fidelity tools). Based on this identified need, you can develop plans for next steps. It is important that staff experience success so they will continue the work and not have to face ?false starts.? Although we have been promoting an integrated academic and behavior approach, we have suggested that the building team start with behavior content and then introduce reading content. We do this because sometimes teacher are concerned about time needed to adequately teach reading. Implementing schoolwide positive behavior support helps to recover teaching time. Additionally, there are some immediate changes that occur with positive behavior supports (e.g., posters are created of behavior expectations). Ultimately, it is successful student behavior that reinforces staff in implementing effective programs, but it helps to see some immediate changes in the environment

**A** that will lead to future student success. Finally, the critical features of implementing schoolwide positive behavior support (e.g., team approach, collecting and acting on data, multi-tiered supports for student) can be transferred to implementation of academic RTI.

**Q** **James Andersen**

We have been implementing RTI in our elementary school for 3 years and are planning to add the behavior component next year. Should the members of the leadership and decision making teams be the same for both academics and behavior? If so, do we need to add additional meetings to our schedule to review the behavioral data? It seems like a lot to add. How would you suggest we work the data review and decision making process into our schedule?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

Many of the schools that we work with are small and do not have the ability for multiple teams. In some cases, even when there are enough staff for multiple teams, it is the same people serving on these different team. Our approach has been to embed this work into the school improvement process. If you have a school improvement team, we suggest that this include the management and coordination around academic and behavior RTI. The benefit is that the work is viewed an important and not just an add on. Additionally, the processes of 1) team approach, 2) data-based decision making, 3) supporting implementation fidelity, and 4) communication of implementation efforts to school community are common functions for these groups and may be more efficiently accomplished through one leadership team. There are content unique features (for example, creating behavior expectation teaching plans) that may be assigned to an ad hoc group (subgroup) that then reports back to the leadership team with the finished product.

**Q** **Kelly Buffington**

Are there tricks or tools available to help teachers track behaviors within the classroom?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

Alberto, P.A., & Troutman, A. C. provide a chapter on teacher friendly techniques for tracking behavior in their book [?Applied Behavior Analysis for Teachers?](#) The main point is that collecting behavioral data should be relatively easy and accurate. The tool will depend on how you use the information collected and how frequent the behavior occurs. For example, high rate behaviors (e.g., 15 x per minute ) are very difficult to record on a form that asks multiple question regarding time, location, intensity, function, etc. In these cases, a simple frequency count with a golfer?s wrist counter or masking tape on wrist watch band with pen written hash marks may be sufficient. Lower rates of behavior can be tracked with paper forms. In some situations, it may be beneficial for the student to track his or her own behavior with accuracy checks provided by the teacher.

**Q** **Ellie Johnson**

How can we help teachers become comfortable with the data collection and analysis process?

**A Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

I think there are two components to this, 1) Developing skills to become more fluent in using data and 2) Helping teachers understand how this is a good thing that will benefit students and make it easier for teachers to teach. Regarding skill development in data collection and analysis process, we provide guidance, tools/materials and multiple examples to practice the skill set. This is done by ?I do? (demonstration by trainer), ?We do? (going through process guided by trainer), and ?You do? (practice by the participants) all with feedback provided around the accuracy. Helping create the understanding that using data is ?good? involves success stories with examples of similar students/settings where the teachers work. This may include colleagues sharing examples on improved outcomes with data-based decisions. It would be helpful to share examples where students improved and also where teacher time was saved through data-based decision. Sometimes teachers may have had experiences where they were punished by through use of data (e.g., evaluation of teacher competence, data used inappropriately), so time spent on appropriate uses of data and developing trust in use of data may be beneficial.

**A Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

Agreed. Another issue for teachers is that have been a part of teams that have collected data, but they are never provided with the results. Further, action items typically have not typically been created that allow the teams to make next steps based on data. I have heard Rob Horner say, only collect data if you are going to make a decision with them. This is why systems (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2004; Sugai & Horner, 2002) are so important before we begin looking at practices. I really appreciated the approach reported in Dowdy et al., 2010 (see Dowdy, E., Ritchey, K., & Kamphaus, R. W. (2010). School-based screening: A population-based approach to inform and monitor children's mental health needs. [References]. *School Mental Health*, 2(4), 166-176. doi: 10.1007/s12310-010-9036-3) about the use of screening data. These recommendations were related to mental health, but I think they have implications for all types of screening data. They recommended: ?establishing a planning and implementation team; determining the specific rationale and goals for screening within their school; evaluating screening tools and choosing an instrument that aligns with the goals; identifying the resources that are available to provide interventions based on screening results; determining the timeline for implementation and process for collecting screening data; disseminating results; providing feedback to teachers, schools, and individual students; analyzing and summarizing data for district-level reporting; linking screening outcomes to services and interventions; and evaluating the screening process? See: Dowdy E, Furlong M, Eklund K, Saeki E, Ritchey K. Screening for mental health and wellness: Current school-based practices and emerging possibilities. In: Doll B, Pfohl W, Yoon JS, editors. *Handbook of youth prevention science*. New York: Routledge; 2010 for secondary source citation.

**Q Julie Kost**

What are various credit options available for students needing extra intervention academically and behaviorally at the secondary level?

**A Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

Great question. First, it is very good that you are tracking this issue. I would recommend the

**A** [National High School Center's Early Warning System](#) for consideration for people who are not using these data. Along with their tool, they offer a [planning guide](#) to help teams prepare for supporting students who are not on track for graduation. Also, you can join their [new community to connect with others](#) who are concerned with this issue. In general, schools in my experience have adopted different processes for credit recovery. These options can include taking qualification tests, online learning, and special recovery classes after schools and evenings. I would recommend checking out the website for [Achievement in Dropout Prevention and Excellence](#). They have done the most research (to my knowledge) about working with students to help them come up with a plan to keep them on track to graduation. Also, there is a movie coming out soon about a student who had this concern: [Who Cared About Kelsey](#)

**Q** **Jean Maynard**

Our middle school adopted PBIS several years ago and we've seen a significant decrease in disruptive behaviors in the hallways and lunchroom. However, there are still a few teachers who resist recognizing and rewarding positive behaviors. It's difficult when some teachers readily hand out "tickets" and others never do. As the principal, what can I do to introduce more consistency to the process?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

It is difficult for people to adopt new practices when they are not used to doing things differently, when they are philosophically opposed to the new practice, when the practice is viewed as extra work, or when the practice does not result in clear benefits. I would suggest that your leadership team considers these factors in a problem solving meeting that includes information gathered around these factors. For example, do you have evidence to share with staff around the results of using an acknowledgement system (e.g., improved student behavior). Do you have staff that could share how easy it is for them to implement the acknowledgement process?

**Q** **Debbie Oliverr**

What other tiered models are being considered such as social and emotional learning?

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

I have found that many schools are implementing models such as school-based mental health and social and emotional learning. [This is an example of what is happening in one state](#). There is increasing evidence that social and emotional supports, at the schoolwide level, can have a positive impact on student outcomes (see: Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The Impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A Meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. [10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x]. Child Development, 82(1), 405-432.). The challenge is to find ways to integrate the supports effectively. I think a key to this is finding ways to integrate these approaches with frameworks related to Professional Learning Communities. By asking questions such as "what do we want for our students academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally; how will we know if they have these skills;

**A** and what will we do if they do not respond" provides a helpful framework to bring these ideas together. The logical connection is through school improvement planning. This would help avoid having separate systems, practices, and data for each approach. Also, in Illinois, our state has adopted [standards for social and emotional learning](#) and that very related to self-determination. If we could integrate these into the schoolwide curriculum, perhaps the likelihood that teachers would support these skills for individual students most at risk would increase. To find out more about social and emotional learning, I would recommend going to the [Colaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning \(CASEL\)](#). For more information on school-based mental health, I would go to [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#). Another example of integrating models (such as positive behavior support and social emotional leaning) is the [State of Delaware?s PBS project](#). They are working on assessments for fidelity and outcomes related to both models.

**Q** **Gail McMillon**

How can we get the support of parents in addressing students' problem behaviors? What is the parent's role in a positive behavior support system?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

Please see my response to Shelly James. Additionally, I would add that student?s families play a significant role in a positive behavior support system. It is helpful when parents see schools as a place to promote the success of their students (this attitude is communicated to the student). Parents provide insights about their students for the functional assessment process and behavior support planning. Parents provide a constant in their child?s lives in advocacy and sharing information across teachers, school years and settings. Finally, parents contribute as a member of the behavior support team in problem solving for their child.

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

See the response to Shelly James about working with parents. As Steve mentioned, including the parents as a part of the team is important. It also is important to remember that parents may not have had positive experiences with school or school staff. It may take time before you can earn the trust the parents. As a classroom teacher of students with behavior disorders, I found a very helpful way to connect with parents was to call them at the beginning of the year and tell them how happy I was to have their student. Many of them had never heard these words come out of a teacher?s mouth. When we needed to work together, they were far more willing to be a part of the problem solving process. Another thought is that some of the person centered nature of more intensive supports (e.g., person centered planning, wraparound, futures planning) may to some extent involve addressing quality of life issues for the family. I find a very helpful resource regarding these supports to be the [Beach Center on Disabilities](#). They have a considerable amount of research on families and positive behavior such as [this document on family perspectives](#). Also, you can see a [very inspiring video](#) about Ann Turnbull?s experiences as a parent (and her husband) about supporting their son JT who had autism. Also the Florida Positive Behavior Support project has [resources](#) regarding supporting families. Also, Mark Durand just published a book for parents called [Optimistic Parenting](#) about supporting children with challenging behavior that you might find

**A** helpful.

**Q** *cindy bazzi*  
How to find enough personnel to fulfill RTI ?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**  
We look at embedding the work within existing structures as much as possible. For example, if a school has a school improvement team, we work to have implementation of RTI as part of this team. Additionally, we work with districts to develop local implementation capacity as well as redefining current roles to serve RTI implementation functions. The problem we always need to consider is that people are so busy. We cannot expect them to do more without taking sometime away to make room for the implementation work.

**Q** **Kelly Vanderbosch**  
How are schools benchmarking for both academic behaviors and social-emotional behaviors?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**  
The benchmarking tools are content specific. For reading, our schools have been using Curriculum Based Measures such as DIBELS or AIMSweb. Typically a team will assess all students in the building with the individual student's teacher a member of the team when assessing the teacher's classroom. For behavior, please see response to Nicole Stoeckel above.

**Q** **Monica Stevenson**  
What are some good behavioral interventions for middle school disruption and off task behavior.

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**  
We have been using the behavior education program (sometime called check in check out) for our project schools. More information can be found on this program in the book by Crone, Hawken and Horner (2010). Responding to problem behavior in schools. Guilford Press. What we like about this program is that it can be implemented to address behavior and academic concerns such as task completion or quality of work completed. Students use a progress reporting system where staff provide frequent feedback on goals that the student is working on. This progress report is carried by the student to each of his/her classes and also brought home at the end of the day. The book describes the program, provides tools for implementation and also provides information on problem solving implementation challenges.

**Q** **Lissa**  
How difficult would it be to translate your recommendations to address preschool? Their behaviors can be pretty extreme at times.



**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**

The key features of RTI in an integrated model (e.g., use of teams to manage and coordinate implementation, data-based decision making, continuum of evidence-based intervention linked to student need) will transfer to implementation at the preschool level. There are specific contextual factors that will be different. For example, there is a greater need for parent/family involvement at the pre-school level. Also, because the students are young with limited behavioral repertoires, there is a larger emphasis on developing social skills. At the preschool level, careful planning is needed in setting up the physical environment to encourage successful social interactions (such as removing ?out of sight? items that make promote off task behavior). Additionally, the vocabulary may need change for the preschool level. For example, using activities instead of art class or second period. The use of different terminology may need to be considered with using some standard tools such as the Schoolwide information system (SWIS).

**Q** **Kathy Catroppa**

Is there research to support the implementation of behavior supports in large urban districts before implementing academic supports?

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

I have not seen research that supports starting with behavior first in large urban districts. In my experience in working with large urban districts, starting with systems is critical to implementation. This includes getting buy-in from the staff. I think presenting a model of supports that includes academic behavior and learning behavior is really important. Either way, you are going to start with putting systems in place prior to intervention. If you look at some of systems tools for PBIS such as the [Team Implementation Checklist](#) and for RtI such as the [Self Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation](#) they all start with key system components (e.g., administrative support, team development, self-assessment). What makes sense about this is that these are the factors some research says is necessary to support effective practices. These include support from the administration; support from teachers; financial resources (e.g., FTE); effective training and coaching; aligned interventions (e.g., PLC); making outcomes are visible; having written plans and manuals; and having specified roles. I would suggest starting with the key system features, and organizing data. If a team starts with behavior because they think this is the most important issue related to buy in, I would not stop them. However, I would not encourage schools to establish more insensitive support teams without addressing the schoolwide academic core as well.

**Q** **Sandy Stidham**

When a child is receiving Tier 3 for supports for behavior and the interventions are not working then what comes next?

**A** **Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.**

I guess I would need to ask about the nature of the Tier 3 supports. I would want to know if the Tier 3 supports were implemented with fidelity and changes to the students program were made over

**A** time. This would be particularly true for intensive academic and behavior support. Sometimes, supports are needed that are beyond simply addressing academic and behaviors in school. Supports such as wraparound and other forms of person centered planning (e.g., futures planning) can be very helpful in this process. Also, having mental health providers as a part of the team can be very important. Social workers, school psychologists, and other community based supports individuals can provide supports for students with more intensive ways that can be very helpful. There is a [framework on the PBIS website](#) that talks more about this issue.

**Q** **ANDRE**  
With the big push in most states to press standardize assessment. Is there any research out there that shows a direct correlation between improving student's behavior leading to better test scores? Particularly for students with EBD.

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**  
This is an excellent question- we need to talk address how Schoolwide behavior support affects academic outcomes. I know that a few states have been collecting information on implementation of Schoolwide behavior support and outcomes on high stakes test. For example, the folks in Illinois have shared this data with positive correlations. We have data for Michigan that suggest that schools with less major discipline referrals coming from the class room also have higher scores on our 4th grade state reading assessments. As you can guess there are a few challenges with collecting and interpreting these data. For example does better academic outcomes lead to better behavior or does better behavior lead to better academic success. It is probably a combination of both. Additionally, we know that these data are correlational--meaning that there may be other factors that ?cause? these results (maybe SES of the community or implementation fidelity). The main point is that implementation of Schoolwide positive behavior can reduce behavior problems resulting more teaching time. It is how we use that time wisely (more learning opportunities, effective strategies) that will lead to the outcomes we desire.

**Q** **Lissa**  
How can universal screenings be conducting for behavior so that schools are not overwhelmed with inappropriate referrals?

**A** **Steve Goodman, Ph.D.**  
Our efforts have been to improve the universal supports (matching to need of students and focus on fidelity of implementation). By doing this, we have reduced the number of referrals with improving the appropriateness of the referrals.

**Q** **Nichole Stoeckel**  
What data sources are recommended for tiering behavior and what are the recommended cut off points for each tier?

**A** *Steve Goodman, Ph.D.*

We are just beginning to use a behavior screen called the Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS) to identify students in need of Tier 2 supports and also to evaluate the adequacy of Tier 1 supports. More information regarding behavioral screening tools can be found in Lane, Menzies, Oakes and Robertson-Kalberg (2012) Systematic screening of behavior to support instruction. New York: Guilford Press. Information obtained from the SRSS would be combined with other sources such as major discipline referral data from the Schoolwide Information System (SWIS). We have been using a cut off decision point as 2 ? 5 major discipline referral would suggest need for Tier 2 supports. 6 or more major discipline referrals would suggest a need for tier III supports. Additionally, we consider the influence on academic performance on student behavior. For example poor decoding skills make lead to a student wanting to avoid reading and contribute to escape maintain problem behavior.

**Q** *Carolyn Pimentel*

Our teachers seem to get stuck on when a student's behavior is disruptive to the learning of the others in class. Any suggestions?

**A** *Hank Bohanon, Ph.D.*

I would recommend a few resources related to classroom management. [Discipline in the Secondary Classroom](#) by Randy Sprick; [Effective Classroom Management](#) by Tim Knoster; [Power Struggles](#) by Allen Mendler. There also are other resources online. [Defusing Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom](#), Geoff Colvin's work. [Classroom management training](#), [The FAST Method](#), [Online Modules](#)

**Q** *Flor Pozuelos*

How to be consistent with this model from k-12 (school-wide)?

**A** *Steve Goodman, Ph.D.*

Although we have has successful implementations at a school by school basis, we find that durable implementation with fidelity needs to be embedded within a district organizational framework. Administration at a district level can provide the political and financial supports to allocate resources across the district. We also find that a district approach can provide efficiencies with develop technical expertise in content areas that may not be present at the school level. We work with district implementation teams to look at k-12 data and plan for implementation across the system.

### **Possible topics to be covered include**

- What are the common systems elements for successful implementation of multi-tiered systems?
- What are the common factors related to effectively implementing evidenced-based practices?

- What are the common systems needed to effectively implement universal screening for academic and behavior support
- What other tiered models are being considered in school environments (e.g., school-based mental health, social and emotional learning)

**Related Resources from RTINetwork.org:**

- [Integrating Behavior and Academic Supports within a Response to Intervention Framework](#), by Hank Bohanon, Ph.D., Steve Goodman, Ph.D., and Kent McIntosh, Ph.D.
- [School-Wide Positive Behavior Support and Response to Intervention](#), by George Sugai, Ph.D.
- [RTI Webinar: Integrating Academic and Behavior Supports Within an RTI Framework](#), presented by Drs. Kent McIntosh, Hank Bohanon, and Steve Goodman

**Additional Online Resources:**

- [OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\)](#)
- [Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative \(MiBLSi\)](#)
- [The Illinois PBIS Network](#)
- [School-wide Positive Behavior Support Implementers? Blueprint and Self-Assessment](#)
- [Problem Solving/Response to Intervention Evaluation Tool Technical Assistance Manual](#)
- [Florida's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support](#)
- [National High School Center](#)