The Effects of School-Wide Discipline Using Positive Behavior Supports

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Abstract

The mission of schools is to continuously search for methods to provide an environment that promotes the achievement of academic and social competencies for students. Educators face many challenges in meeting these expectations. The purpose of this study was to determine if school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) was a viable alternative for Olathe district schools to employ for the purpose of improving behavior and academic outcomes for all students. The researcher examined the impact of the implementation of SWPBS on behavioral archival data, academic outcomes, school climate surveys, and interviews with principals and teachers to determine if there was a positive change in school climate with the utilization of SWPBS.

The researcher analyzed data over a four year span (0, 1, 2, and 3 years) of students exposed to SWPBS implementation to determine if significant changes occurred in student behaviors. Data included office referrals and in and out of school suspensions, academic scores from the Kansas State Assessments, and district staff climate surveys from each school participating in the study. A mixed quantitative and qualitative design was used to collect and analyze data for this research study. The quantitative portion of the study compared the behavioral archival data (office referrals, in-school suspensions, out of school suspensions) of three designated Olathe elementary schools, Kansas State Assessment scores, and district staff climate responses. The qualitative portion of the study investigated teacher and administrator perceptions of student behavior, school climate, and academic scores to determine if perceptions had changed as a result of implementing SWPBS.

The interpretation of results revealed mixed findings over the four year span of

the study. The evidence indicated the number of documented student office referrals and in-school suspensions significantly decreased, while out-of-school suspensions did not significantly decrease over the four years of the study. Overall findings for academic improvement in reading and math in the study were mixed. Reading scores significantly improved among students who had been exposed to 2 or 3 years of SWPBS, while math scores did not significantly improve over the three years of SWPBS. Findings among the three schools indicated school A and school C reading scores improved while school B's scores did not significantly change over the 3 years of SWPBS. Student Kansas state assessment math scores decreased between the first and second year of SWPBS and increased during the third year; however, the scores were not significantly different from the two previous years. The qualitative portion of the study offered additional evidence to support the relationship between SWPBS and academic achievement in both reading and math as principal and teacher perceptions included other types of data and tests to evaluate academic progress.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my husband who encouraged me continuously through this research process. He believed in me and knew I could accomplish my goals on many days when I was uncertain. His never ending support, knowledge, love, and patience continue to inspire me.

Acknowledgements

I would like to convey my sincere appreciation to Dr. Harold Frye and Ms. Peg Waterman for their continued support and encouragement throughout the entire research process. My endless questions were accepted with graciousness followed by valuable advice to keep me motivated and focused on my research questions. Both Dr. Frye and Ms. Waterman spent countless hours analyzing numerous drafts of this work to offer positive critical suggestions for improvement.

I would also like to thank members of the Olathe School District staff. Dr. George, former Assistant Superintendent for Quality Management, provided crucial information on the climate study that is utilized by the Olathe School District. Heidi Garza, Special Education Director was instrumental in providing information from the U.S. Department of Education concerning the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Recovery Funds for district-wide professional development utilizing School-wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS). Mary Matthew, Director of School Improvement and Assessment, provided essential information on state assessment scores. The principals of the schools involved in this study courageously shared documentation of office referrals and in-and-out-of-school suspensions. In addition, all the principal and teacher interviewees gave generously of their own out-of-school contract time to share individual experiences and perceptions of the effects of SWPBS.

Finally, I would like to thank my former classmate, Dr. Ruth Randall, for the countless hours she spent collaborating with me. Together we persevered and forged ahead, learning, working, sighing, laughing, and consoling one another. I will be forever grateful for her expertise and friendship.

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Chapter One

Introduction and Rationale

Major challenges face present day educators attempting to meet the academic and emotional needs of diverse learners in classrooms across the country. Increasing numbers of students demonstrate inappropriate and unsafe behavior at school (Irvin, Horner, Ingram, Todd, Sugai, Sampson, & Boland, 2006). National data indicate while violence and theft in schools are decreasing, disruptive behavior in schools is increasing (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006). The National Center for Educational Statistics also stated forty-six percent of public schools (approximately 38,500 schools) took a serious disciplinary action against a student for specific offenses during the 2007-2008 school year. In 2010, approximately 767,900 serious disciplinary actions were taken by public schools during that period (Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2010). In addition, the public has noted discipline as a major concern. The Rose and Gallup 38th Annual Phi Delta Kappa Survey (Rose & Gallup, 2006) identified school discipline as the third major problem facing schools. The 44th Annual Phi Delta Kappa Survey (Bushaw & Lopez, 2012) reported an increasing concern with bullying with three of four American adults stating bullying prevention should be part of a school's curriculum. The National Center for Educational Statistics (2007) stated educators are dissatisfied with the behavioral climates of their buildings with recent estimates suggesting as many as 43 percent of teachers leave the profession within five years because of student behavior.

According to Epstein, Atkins, Cullinan, Kutash and Weaver (2008), there is a clear relationship between academic performance and student behavior. Academic learning is directly and indirectly impeded by inappropriate and unsafe behavior

demonstrated in schools. Therefore, successful discipline, improved school climate, and behavioral competence are integrally related to improving academic outcomes. Mifflen (2009) stated school culture and climate have an immense influence on students' academic achievement.

Campbell (2009) found the implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) facilitated positive changes in student attitude, student behavior, and overall school climate. In addition, Campbell stated by utilizing a SWPBS approach, educators and administrators were able to create a school environment that fostered acceptable social behavior and attempted to systematically deter problem behaviors before they happened. SWPBS is not a curriculum, intervention, or practice. The decision-making framework of SWPBS guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Center on Effective School-wide Interventions (2012) affirmed School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports are proactive approaches designed to teach alternatives to problem behaviors and prevent discipline problems on an individual, classroom, and school-wide basis.

Sugai, Horner, Algozzine, Barrett, Lewis, Anderson, and Simonsen (2010) stated SWPBS approaches include clear and consistent behavior expectations, procedures for communicating expectations to staff and students as well as encouraging expected behaviors, methods of preventing problem behaviors, data collection systems used to guide decision-making regarding behaviors that need intensive intervention, and classroom behavior management practices and routines that parallel the school-wide

discipline system. SWPBS approaches rely upon data based decision-making and research validated practices in order to guide responses to discipline issues. SWPBS schools apply a multi-tiered approach to prevention, using disciplinary data and principles of behavior analysis to develop school-wide, targeted, and individualized interventions and supports to improve school climate. Simonsen, Sugai, and Negron (2008) completed a cost-benefit analysis which found schools implementing SWPBS saved administrators an average of 15.75 days a year on office discipline referrals, while students saved an average of 79.5 days of instructional time.

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2010) has encouraged local education agencies (LEA) to use Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) Recovery Funds for intensive, district-wide professional development utilizing SWPBS. LEAs can utilize stimulus funds to implement data systems that track disciplinary referrals. The US Department of Education also encouraged LEAs to use their IDEA and Title I Recovery funds to implement data systems to improve teaching and learning. States are able to set aside IDEA funds to assist LEA's in implementing SWPBS and can also apply for State Personnel Development Grants to do the same.

Problem Statement

Utilization of SWPBS has become an important intervention approach system for schools in the United States with over 9,000 U.S. schools implementing the evidence-based, data-driven framework proven to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase school safety, and support improved academic outcomes (Horner, Sugai, Smolkowski, Eber, Nakasato, Todd, & Experanza, 2009). Increasing numbers of student behavior incidents

in schools interrupt learning (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011). Classroom disruptions, playground, and lunchroom altercations can require outside intervention such as student assistance teams, counselor support, office referrals, removal from the classroom, and even suspension. Schools utilizing SWPBS aim to establish a safe and orderly environment with a positive climate in order to maximize teaching and learning opportunities for all students (Campbell, 2009).

The Olathe Public School District (OPSD), a large, suburban school district in the greater Kansas City metropolitan area, was interested in establishing a support system that would enable school staff to select, integrate, and implement behavioral practices for improving academic and behavior outcomes for all students. Increasing instructional time and improving student learning would promote meeting the district's annual yearly progress (AYP), as mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a United States Act of Congress concerning the education of children in public schools. OPSD incorporated SWPBS as part of implementing Multiple Tiers of Instruction (MTSS) in terms of reading, math, and behavior to assist the needs of special education students and students requiring additional support to meet state academic standards (Kansas State Department of Education, 2011). MTSS is a coherent continuum of evidence based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower each Kansas student to achieve high standards (Kansas State Department of Education, 2011).

Background and Conceptual Framework

According to the U.S. 2010 Census Bureau, the Olathe City Census 2010 results

indicate the city of Olathe has quadrupled and has become the fourth largest city in the Kansas City metropolitan area since the 1950's, with a population of 125,872. The estimated median income in 2010 for a household in Olathe was $75,009 and approximately 4.1% of the population was below the poverty line. The 2010 city Census revealed Olathe becoming more diverse over the past decade with non-white residents increasing from 11.4 % to 16.9% of the total populations. The African-American population increased from 2.7% to 5.3% between 2000 and 2010. Olathe's Asian population increased from 2.7% to 4.1% of the total population. Most significant was the increase in the number of Hispanics or Latinos of any race in Olathe, which increased more than 150% from 5,060 to 12,794. The increase as a percentage of the total population was from 5.4 to 10.2%. The 2010 city Census established the racial make-up of the city as 77.7% Caucasian, 4.1 % Asian, 5.1% African-American, 0.1% Islander, 0.2% Two or more races, 0.3% Native American, 0.05% Pacific Islander, 3.4% from other races and 10.2% Hispanic. From 2000 to 2010, the percent of minority students increased for all groups except Native Americans. The largest increases were for Hispanic (4.02 to 12.50 %) and Multi-Racial (0.47 to 3.17%) populations. A growth in poverty was also noted. The number of district students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program had grown annually, increasing from 9.75 % in 2000 to 25.27 % in 2010. School enrollment mirrored the changes in diversity and increase in population noted by the city census.

Figure 1 on the following page, indicates the significant change in ethnic make-up and increase in diversity between 2000 and 2010 in the Olathe School District. The information was retrieved from the Olathe Public Schools USD 233, 2010.

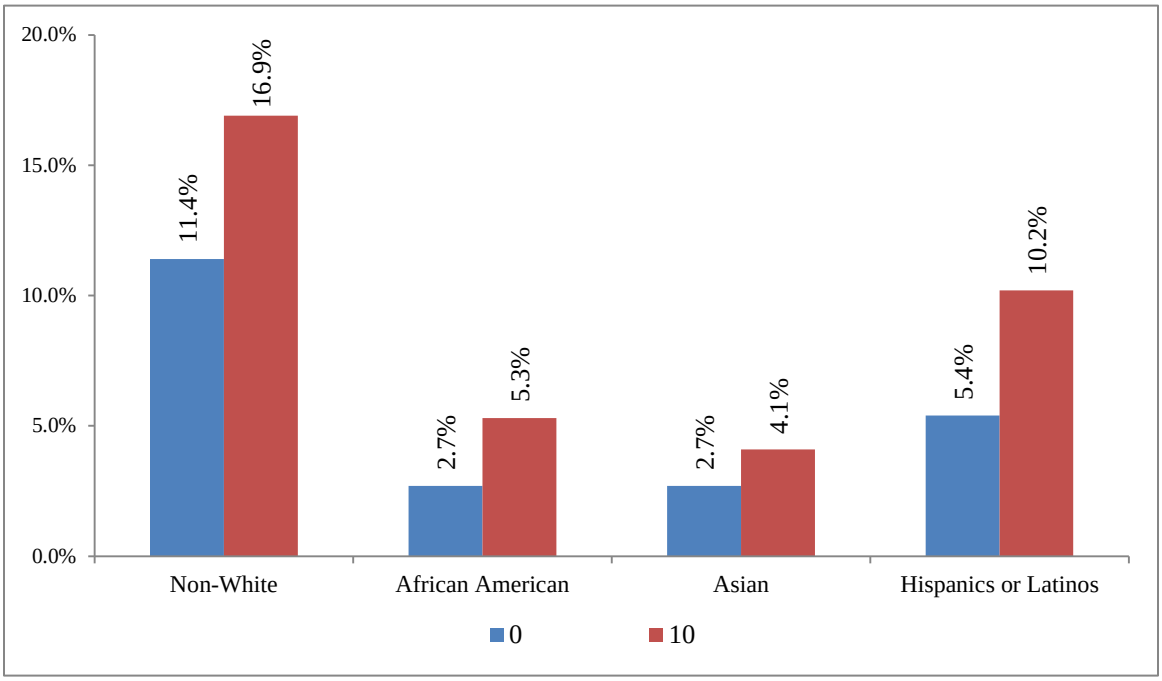

Figure 1. Olathe Ethnicity 2000 & 2010. Adapted from *Growth and Facilities Impact Report for Olathe Public Schools* by USD 233, 2010. Retrieved from http://www.olatheschools.com/aboutus/district-overview

The Olathe Public School District's 2010 Growth and Facilities Impact Report stated an enrollment of 27,999 students for the 2010 - 2011 school year involving thirty-four elementary schools, nine middle schools, four high schools and eight specialty facilities. District enrollment increased from 3,687 students in 1965 to 27, 999 students in 2010.

The Olathe School District 2010 Growth and Facilities Impact Report also stated the enrollment in the Olathe Public Schools had increased continuously for 45 years stemming from two factors. Incoming kindergarten classes were consistently larger than

the previous year's graduating senior class and an increasing amount of families with children moved to the Olathe district as described in Figure 2.

Figure 2 demonstrates the growth in the size of kindergarten classes that are consistently larger than the previous year's graduating senior class. This increase has ranged from a low of 124 students to a high of 430 students in the Olathe School District.

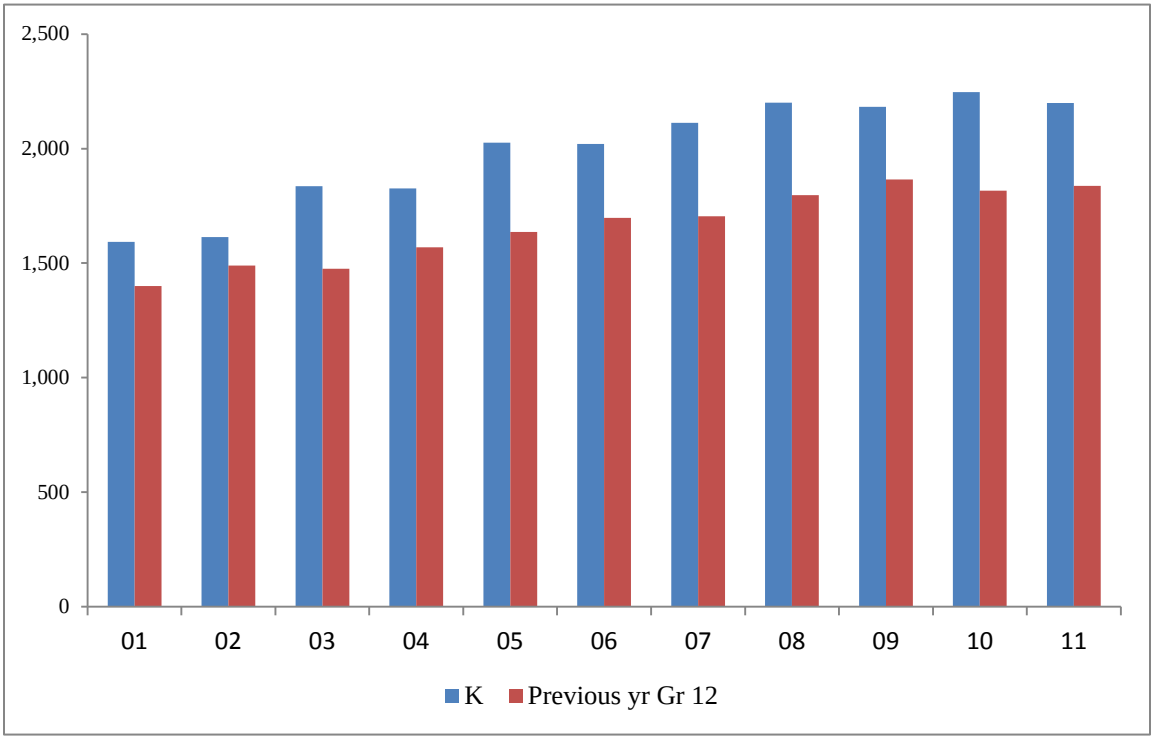

Figure 2. Kindergarten (K) versus Seniors (Previous year Grade 12).

Adapted from *Growth and Facilities Impact Report for Olathe Public Schools* USD 233, 2010-11. Retrieved from http://www.olatheschools.com/aboutus/district-overview

Figure 3 demonstrates the increasing number of families moving to the Olathe district and the student body becoming more diverse. The number of district students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program had grown annually, increasing from 9.75 % in 2000 to 25.27 % in 2010. Schools with a high percentage of students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program qualified for some federal Title 1 funding. Title 1 funding is based on calculations of poverty. Free and reduced lunch is one indicator as is Aid to Dependent Children. The influx of families at the lower level of income directly contributes to Title 1 funding (Mid America Regional Council, www.marc.org).

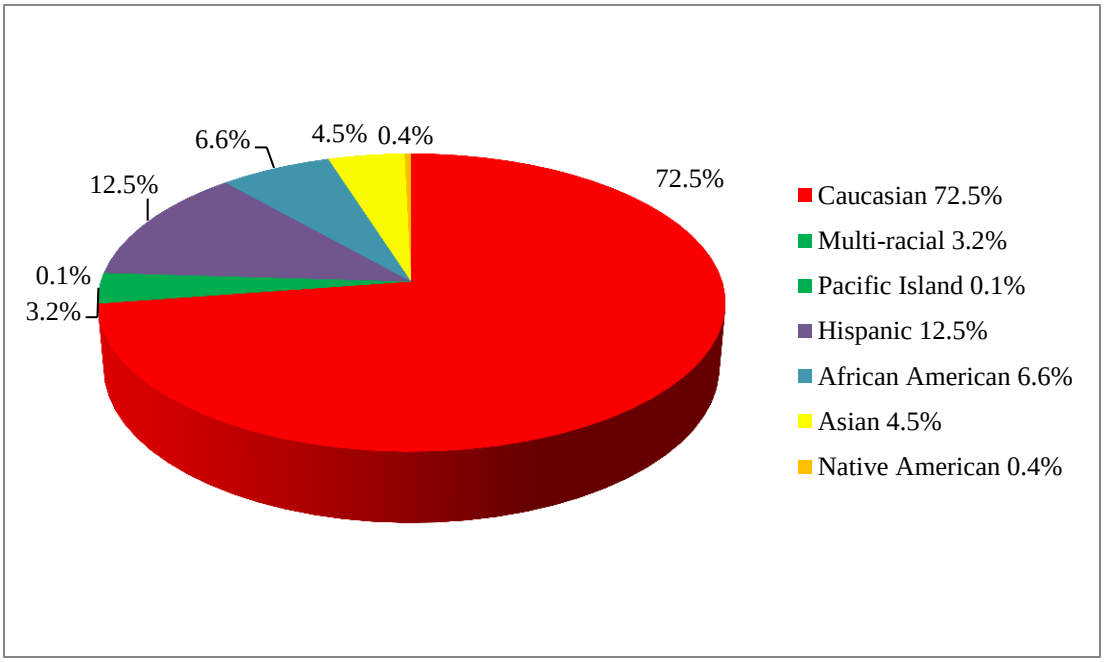

Figure 3. *Olathe District Student Ethnic/Racial Breakdown 2009-10*

Adapted from *Growth and Facilities Impact Report for Olathe Public Schools* by USD 233, 2010-11. Retrieved from http://www.olatheschools.com/aboutus/district-overview

Figure 4 presents the consistent forty five years of growth in the Olathe Public School System with enrollment peaking at 27, 999 students for the 2010-2011 school year.

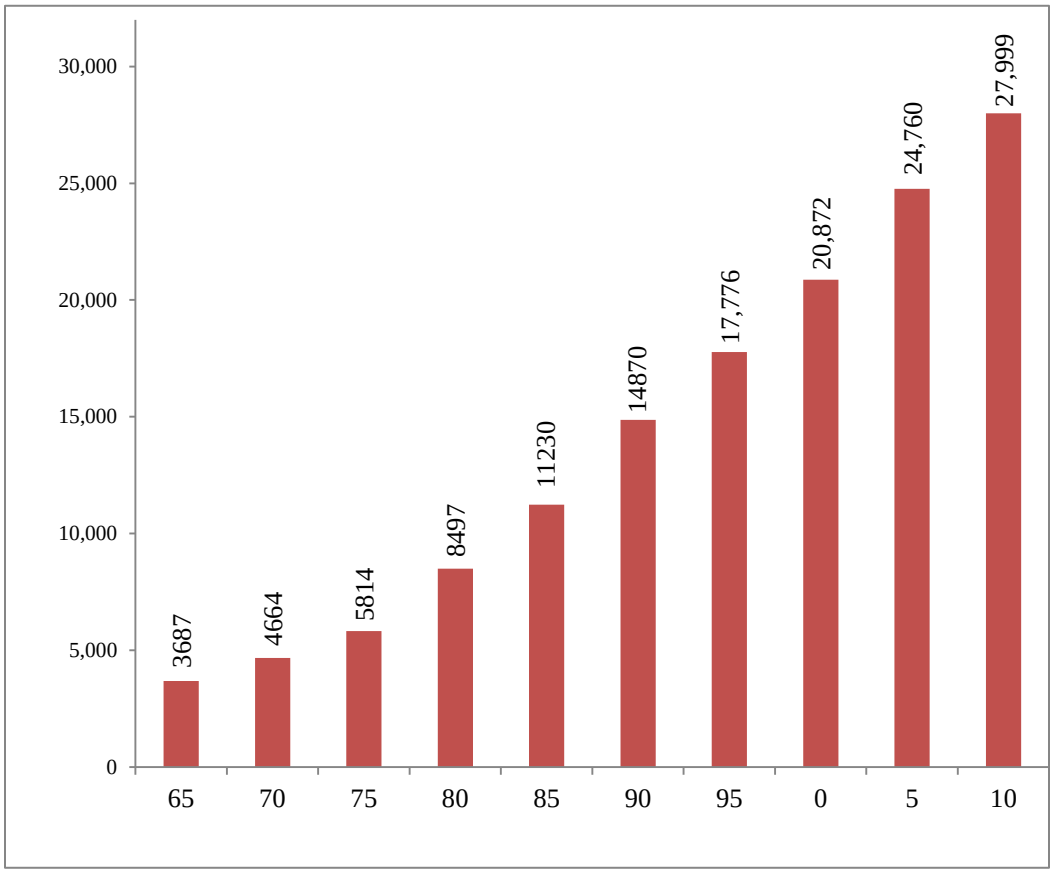

Figure 4. Olathe School District Total School Enrollment 1965 through 2010-11 Adapted from September Olathe District Enrollment Projection data for 2010-11. Retrieved from http://www.olatheschools.com/aboutus/district-overview

Due to state request, the district's 2010-11enrollment includes 114 students in Head Start, a federal program implemented by the Olathe district, prior to state requirements to be included in the official count.

The Olathe Public School District examined the large amount of research and data supporting SWPBS and determined it to be an effective practice to promote meeting the district's adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals mandated by the U.S. Department of Education (2010). These AYP goals were a result of the Blueprint for Reform: Reauthorization of the elementary and secondary education act or also referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a measure of year-to-year student achievement on statewide assessments. Each state comes up with its own definition on what it means to make AYP. Definitions involve three specific outcomes: the percentage of students that must be proficient or above when tested in reading and mathematics (yearly in grades 3-8 and once in high school); whether or not at least 95 percent of students in those grades participated in the assessments; and, the additional academic indicator (e.g., graduation rates for high schools) that will be measured.

In addition to AYP, the National Blueprint for Reform also emphasized improved communication with parents and making all schools safer for students (Kansas State Department of Education [KSDE], 2009). The Olathe school district was able to provide training for SWPBS by obtaining a special education Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP) grant from the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE, 2011a) funded under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) The U.S. Department of Education Data Express (2012a) defined IDEA as a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. TIP grants are available to assist

districts in improving results for students with disabilities, specifically in areas identified through the Kansas Integrated Accountability System (KIAS), the State Performance Plan Indicators, KSBE Board Goals, State Personnel Development Grant and the Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (KSDE, 2011b).

The Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) is a continuum of evidence based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower each Kansas student to achieve high standards (KSDE, 2011b). MTSS is included in the Kansas Board of Education Strategic Agenda Goals and Objectives as a way of providing a flexible delivery system to meet the changing needs of students. A building fully implementing MTSS would be addressing both academics and behavior through a school wide approach (KSDE, 2011b).

Training in SWPBS strategies was provided to all elementary and middle school teachers in the Olathe School District. SWPBS was implemented as a component of Multiple Tiers of Instruction (MTSS) in terms of reading, math, and behavior with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower each Kansas student to achieve high standards (KSDE, 2011b). The Kansas State Department of Education website (KSDE, 2011a) displays a building report card for each school and district in the state. The importance of increase in student performances on standardized testing programs makes it vital for the district to examine every possible avenue of meeting standards set forth by the state.

Significance of the Study

Implementing SWPBS is one proactive approach to aid in reducing disciplinary

problems in schools (Campbell, 2009). This study offered information to the Olathe School District regarding the results of the initial implementation phase during the first three years of SWPBS in the district selected schools. Study results may affect decision making regarding further implementation of SWPBS as a significant contributor to successful MTSS interventions that help students meet district annual yearly progress mandated by NCLB (2001). This researcher also attempted to gain knowledge to support the learning of all students by contributing to existing research on SWPBS programs. SWPBS serves as a successful multi-tiered approach to prevention using disciplinary data, principles of behavior analysis to develop school-wide, targeted, and individualized interventions and supports to improve school climate and academic learning.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine if SWPBS was a viable alternative for Olathe district schools to improve behavior and academic outcomes for all students. The study also examined the relationship between the implementation of SWPBS, academic outcomes, and school climate to determine if there was a positive change in school climate scores in addition to academic scores with the utilization of SWPBS.

The first purpose of the study was to determine if significant changes occurred in student behaviors (office referrals, in & out of school suspensions) among 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of students exposed to SWPBS implementation. The second purpose of the study was to determine if significant changes occurred in student academic scores (Kansas State Assessments) among 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of students exposed to SWPBS implementation. A third purpose of the study was to determine if significant changes occurred in school climate utilizing the district staff climate survey among 0, 1, 2, and 3

years of staff implementing SWPBS. The fourth purpose of the study was to determine if teacher and administrator perceptions of student behavior, school climate, and academic scores had changed as a result of implementing SWPBS.

Delimitations

According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), delimitations are self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of a study. This study was limited to three elementary schools in the Olathe Public School District. District state assessment scores, office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions were collected and limited to third, fourth, and fifth grade students. District employee climate scores were collected by the researcher at three selected elementary schools. Qualitative interviews were conducted with two teachers and the current principal in each of the three selected elementary schools. These delimitations may affect the ability to generalize the findings beyond the sample in this study

Assumptions

Assumptions are postulates, premises, and propositions that are accepted as operational for purposes of the research (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Assumptions are what the researcher assumes to be true. The following assumptions were made in this study.

1. The archival school data (district state assessment scores, office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions) gathered by each school were accurate and complete.
2. The district employee climate responses gathered by district surveys were accurate and complete.

3. The principals and teachers in the experimental groups were supportive of SWPBS, worked together, and utilized strategies presented during trainings.
4. Information relayed in the course of interviews with teachers and principals was provided truthfully and without fear of district reprisal.

Research Questions

Flick (2006) stated researchers can differentiate between research questions oriented towards describing states and those describing processes. "In the first case, you should describe how a certain given state (which type, how often) has come about (causes, strategies) and how this state is maintained (structure). In the second case, the aim is to describe how something develops or changes (causes, processes, consequences, strategies)." This researcher asked both types of questions because this was a mixed quantitative and qualitative methods study. The research questions guiding this study were:

1. To what extent have changes occurred in documented student behaviors (office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions) among students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS?
2. To what extent have changes occurred in academic scores among students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS?
3. To what extent have changes occurred in district employee school climate scores among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS?
4. What are the perceptions of student behaviors among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?

5. What are the perceptions of student academic scores among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?
6. What are the perceptions of changes in school climate among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?

Definition of Terms

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Analysis of variance is a general method of analyzing data from designed experiments, whose objective is to compare two or more group means. The t-test is a special case of ANOVA in which only two means are compared (Informa Healthcare; Bolton & Bon, 2009).

Disruptions. Inappropriate behaviors that impede learning, break the school rules, and are reported to the office becoming part of the schools' archival records (SWIS Documentation Project, 2006).

Functional Behavior Plan. A specific plan that is written to meet the needs of an individual child's behavior and learning needs after studying all the variables that may contribute to the child's learning challenges and/or inappropriate behaviors (PBIS.org, 2011).

Multiple Tiers of Instruction (MTSS). A coherent continuum of evidence based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavior needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making on educational goals (KSDE, 2009).

Occurrence of Discipline Referrals (ODR). The occurrence of discipline referrals to the office. Frequency of ODR to the office defined three categories of students with differing support needs (Horner, Sugai, Todd, et al., 2005).

Open Ended Interview. Interview given by the researcher to principals and randomly selected teacher, allowing participants to respond in their own words, and is qualitative in nature (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS refers to effective school-wide interventions that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behavior for positive student learning environments. PBIS is another name synonymous to Positive Behavior Supports (PBIS.org, 2011).

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS). Strategies utilized in education to aid students that are having difficulty learning and/or following the rules of the school establishment. PBS process emphasizes the creation of systems that support the adoption and implementation of evidence-based practices and procedures to help students meet their social and academic goals (PBIS.org, 2011).

Precorrection. Process of identifying and analyzing settings in which problem behavior could most likely be triggered along with the function of the behavior. Expected and acceptable behaviors would be identified. The setting would then be modified to reteach acceptable behavior to student/s (PBIS.org, 2011).

Response to Intervention (RTI). RTI includes a combination of high quality, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction; assessment; and evidence-based interventions. Comprehensive RTI implementation will contribute to more meaningful identification of learning and behavioral problems, improve instructional quality, provide all students with the best opportunities to succeed in school, and assist with the identification of learning disabilities and other disabilities (National Center on Response to Intervention, http://www.rti4success.org).

School climate. School climate refers to the social atmosphere of a "learning environment" in which students have different experiences, depending upon the protocols set up by the teachers and administrators (PBIS.org, 2011).

School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS). PBS strategies are adopted school-wide (PBIS, 2011).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This law ensures services to children with disabilities throughout the United States. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities (ED.gov, 2011).

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This act was signed into law by President Bush in January of 2002 and reauthorized the existing Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) with new accountability measures for all public schools. The goal of this act stated all children would be proficient in reading and math by 2014. All states were expected to develop new tests in reading and math for grades 3-8, plus one grade-level in high school, to measure students' academic progress. The law requires that all children be taught by "highly qualified" teachers. The law also emphasizes improving communication with parents and making all schools safer for students (KSDE, 2009).

t-test. The t-test is used in statistical analysis and assesses whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008).

Targeted Improvement Plan (TIP). A special education improvement grant from

the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) funded under the IDEA (KSDE, 2012).

Overview of Methodology

A mixed quantitative and qualitative design was used to collect and analyze data for this research study. For quantitative measures, chi square tests of independence compared the behavioral archival data (office referrals, individual functional behavior plans, in-school suspensions, out of school suspensions) of three designated Olathe elementary schools. The dependent variables were the archival data that were gathered. The independent variable was the number of years (0, 1, 2, 3) of implementing SWPBS. The period of years began one year prior to implementing SWPBS and for the following three years of SWPBS implementation.

For quantitative measures, one-factor ANOVA's were used to analyze the academic state assessment scores of third, fourth, and fifth graders in three designated Olathe elementary schools. The dependent variables were the state reading and math assessment scores. The independent variable was the number of years (0,1,2,3) SWPBS had been implemented. An additional two-factor ANOVA was utilized to further analyze changes across schools by adding schools as another dependent variable.

Chi square tests of independence compared the results of the Olathe climate survey over a four year period of time beginning prior to the first year of SWPBS implementation. The dependent variables were the climate responses with the independent variable being the years SWPBS had been implemented.

The qualitative section of the study included open ended interviews used to survey all three principals with a purposive sampling of two teachers from each school building to gather information on perceptions of change in school office referrals, in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, Kansas state reading and math scores, and school climate over three years of implementing SWPBS.

Organization of the Study

This study investigated the effects of implementing SWPBS on student behavior and school climate by examining data collected from three elementary schools in the Olathe School District. These schools had utilized SWPBS for three consecutive years with the same school administrators as educational leaders. The schools had varied student populations in terms of geographic location, size, socio-economic status, and discipline problems. A mixed quantitative and qualitative design was used for this study. Information gathered from this study contributed information to current research on SWPBS and also assisted the Olathe School District in creating school environments that foster acceptable social behavior so all students can meet their academic outcomes.

The research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one includes the purpose of the study, research questions, and definitions of key terms used throughout the study. Chapter two presents a review of the literature related to the history of school discipline, supporting theories and case studies of SWPBS, challenges of implementing SWPBS, the relationship of school climate and SWPBS, and benefits of SWPBS for the school community. Chapter three examines the research design for the study, data collection procedures, and statistical analysis. Chapter four presents an analysis of the

data and findings of the research. Chapter five contains conclusions of the study and recommendations for future studies.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

Increasing numbers of student behavior incidents in schools interrupt learning (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011). Classroom disruptions, playground, and lunchroom altercations can require outside intervention such as student assistance teams, counselor support, office referrals, removal from the classroom, and even suspension.

The lack of discipline has been identified as the most serious problem facing the education system in the United States over much of the last twenty-five years (Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 2007). Historically, punitive approaches to discipline have been utilized by schools including suspension and expulsion of students who exhibit serious misbehaviors. Current trends in education include professional learning communities and school-wide implementation of positive behavior supports to meet the diverse educational and behavioral needs of students and teachers in twenty-first century schools.

The literature review examines information applicable to school discipline associated with school climate and academic learning. This chapter is divided into five sections and provides explanation related to the following topics: the history of school discipline, theories supporting the benefits of SWPBS, challenges of implementing SWPBS, the relationship of school climate and SWPBS, and a summary of the literature review.

The History of School Discipline

Butchart and McEwan (1998) stated student discipline and classroom management have always been a concern for teachers, administrators, and teacher educators. Control has become a greater problem in the last half century with the public becoming increasingly agitated and the educational dialogue about discipline and management intensifying. Butchart and McEwan (1998) stressed understanding the history of classroom management is essential to move the field of classroom management into the inevitable moral and political considerations implicated in every discipline decision.

Taylor's *Art of Class Management and Discipline of 1903* (as cited in Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 22) described traditional schooling in the U.S. colonial period as predominately face to face encounters. Masters relied on force and fear alone to maintain order, punish misbehavior, correct errors in lessons, and pass on to their students the moral order of their society. The moral order during this time period was hierarchical with each level holding an unquestionable right over its social inferiors. This unquestionable right included the privilege to remind students of their inferiority through physical violence. Perceptions of honor and shame gave the society its moral core. Authority and power were clear and external, residing in the king and the nobility. This authority was delegated through the king and nobility to patriarchs in their families, and to specified masters. Masters included guild masters, slave masters, and school masters. The school house and the school master exemplified the moral order to the children sent to them. According to Butchart and McEwan (1998), American Republicanism and industrialism contributed to reforming traditional schooling. Two related but diverse

reforms began early in the 1800's. The first reform was bureaucratic discipline institutionalized quickly in urban centers.

Joseph Lancaster (as cited in Butchart & McEwan, 1998) demonstrated bureaucratic discipline in his monitorial schools. Lancaster developed and deployed a form of disciplinary power that altered relationships between teacher and students. Bureaucratic discipline sought to create an internalized, impersonal, bureaucratic authority. Students were no longer in face-to-face relationships with a master, but in a group relationship with monitors who were more advanced pupils that held rank by technical bureaucratically measured merit. Surveillance was continuous with numerous monitors. Each monitor was responsible for teaching, examining, and overseeing the study of a small group of learners of approximately equal ability and attainment. The master and higher monitors, in turn, surveyed the monitors and multiple groups.

Butchart and McEwan (1998, p. 24) reported Lancaster prohibited corporal punishment and used fear to control students. He encouraged motivation by using rewards, prizes, and promotions, including promotion into and within the ranks of the monitors, signified publicly by a badge and chain to be worn about a monitor's neck. In addition, each class was ranked against all other classes, and seated as a class by rank. Each pupil was ranked against other pupils in the class and seated within the class by rank. Lancaster substituted sanctioned, teacher-directed humiliation of offenders by other students in place of personal, physical violence to assure obedience. Lancaster designed this form of disciplinary pedagogy only for the children of the new industrial poor to provide a basic literacy, and moral training for the lower orders of urban society.

Butchart and McEwan (1998, p. 25), further explained Lancaster formulated a disciplinary pedagogy that changed the type and frequency of student surveillance, in addition to establishing new disciplinary technologies in structures, procedures, rituals, and processes. Examples of resulting disciplinary structures were the uses of monitors to assure constant surveillance and application on the part of the pupils and a reward system to embed motivation in the processes rather than in the teacher, pedagogy, or the students' interest. Further structures included continuous competitive, normative examinations and promotions, and the system of advancement in our schools based on individual achievement such as grades and honors reward system.

The second quarter of the nineteenth century witnessed the demise of monitorial schools; however, central features of bureaucratic discipline remained and were institutionalized in most nineteenth-century schools (Butchart & McEwan, 1998). The movement to bureaucratic, non-monitorial schools was negotiated by a second reform in school relationships. This reform in historical literature was referred to as "soft pedagogy" or "New England pedagogy." New England pedagogy sought to instill an internalized authority just like Lancastrian education; however, the process and nature of that internalization of authority varied from Lancaster's formula. Reformers advocated deeply personal, relationships built upon emotional affection. These reformers devised a disciplinary pedagogy that established authority built on emotional ties, guilt, and a personal internalized scrutiny. New England disciplinary pedagogy taught what Hogan (as cited in Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 26) referred to as "affective individualism," or "conscience."

New England pedagogy revolutionized both schools and families in the nineteenth century (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 26). This system of beliefs immersed into nineteenth-century fiction, domestic advice, and reformed literature. The ideal school, like the ideal family, exhibited love, affection, and deep emotional dependence upon the authority figure. A child was to be disciplined not by fear of pain, but by the fear of withdrawal of affections and withholding of love, and by expressions of disappointment in the child's inappropriate offenses.

New England disciplinary pedagogy re-established the teacher as an object of affection and admiration. Corporal punishment was rejected in schools except for extraordinary situations, which often meant reserving it for the correction of working-class children whose home life seemingly failed to prepare them for a gentler discipline. In place of emulation and physical force, the reformers constructed a disciplinary pedagogy intended to "engage the interests of children by transforming learning into a pleasurable activity" Emerson E. White School Management: *A Practical Treatise for Teachers and All Other Persons Interested in the Right Training of the Young* (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 26). White maintained New England disciplinary pedagogy sought to replace extrinsic motivation with intrinsic motivation. Conscience was developed as obedience and application became moral duties owed to the helping, caring authority.

Other aspects of classroom discipline were embedded in new disciplinary structures such as nineteenth-century schools moving toward small, self-contained, graded classrooms, closely regulated school rituals and practices, and systems of promotions, retentions, and demotions (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 27). Teachers experimented with creating the original report card and systems of merits and demerits.

Object teaching began to replace recitations, allowing both more learning-by-doing, and introducing whole-class teaching. Smaller classes following strictly controlled practices improved surveillance, while concurrently reincorporating surveillance in adult authority, not in other learners as was the case in monitorial schools. Promotions, demotions, systems of merits and demerits, and other tangible rewards or punishments removed a portion of the burden of motivation from the teacher to external factors. Emotional goals, as contrasted with precise intellectual goals, provided one more disciplinary structure of significance in understanding nineteenth-century education.

Butchart and McEwan (1998, p. 28) noted bureaucratic pedagogy emerged nearly fully formed in a very brief period spreading rapidly through many urban areas and then dropped its monitoring characteristics after the 1830's. New England pedagogy, on the other hand, surfaced slowly and unevenly. Throughout the century, and even well into the twentieth century, mixtures of traditional pedagogy, bureaucratic disciplinary pedagogy and New England disciplinary pedagogy coexisted, particularly in small, rural schools. Traditional examples of external authority such as switches, whips, and paddles rested on the desks or hung from the walls of the same teachers who taught in bureaucratized classrooms, yet endeavored to develop affectional authority.

"Samuel Chapman Armstrong and other educators devised and promoted an important modification of bureaucratic pedagogy in the last third of the nineteenth century" (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 29). Butchart and McEwan acknowledged Armstrong was the founder of the Hampton Institute in 1868 who created racialized disciplinary structures and pedagogies explicitly for African-Americans in the southern states after the Civil War. Affectional authority was deemed out of the question for such

learners. Empathy and equality between teacher and students was not tolerated during the era. Armstrong argued traditional education was inappropriate for African Americans since the market required trained black labor to be industrious, worthy and aware of its need for the "civilizing influences" (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 29) of the white race.

The work of Armstrong and others in southern black industrial education affected Native American education and education on foreign mission fields. These educators rejected affectional authority, with its intense emotional bonds. "In its place they introduced the authority of sacrificial racial paternalism" (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 30). Sacrificial racial paternalism was modeled daily by the acceptance of self-denial as principals and presidents of segregated institutions. Jackman (1994) described the term, paternalism, as "one which connotes benevolence and carries a significance that is both general and contemporary." Jackman affirmed paternalism was a powerful ideological mold that offers the most efficient and gratifying means for the social control of relationships between unequal groups. The long-term goal was to preserve amicable relationships with subordinates to prevent conflict.

Sacrificial racial paternalism established a racial gap and the implication of an unfulfilling moral debt owed to those making the sacrifice (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 31). Sacrificial racial paternalism also justified the establishment of boarding schools, since white educators believed target populations presented cultural inferiority and inadequate morals. Boarding schools expanded surveillance into the private lives of students, extending disciplinary power to nearly twenty-four hours a day.

The industrial curriculum delegated many hours a day to manual labor and physical activity instead of intellectual activity. The experiences with industrial

education in the last quarter of the nineteenth century affected some of the changes in disciplinary power that occurred after the turn of the century. Mass society, corporate order, the advancement of science, and the shift from markets for capital goods to consumer markets, all influenced the existing forms of classroom discipline. Industrial education had demonstrated the significant influence of differentiated disciplinary systems created for the impending futures of various races and classes (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, pp. 30-31).

Important changes during the early Progressive years of discipline in America (1880-1910) resulted in new forms of disciplinary pedagogy and structures that continued to be utilized into the mid-1950's and can be referred to as progressive discipline and management. "Progressive teachers constructed a new form of authority. Authority did not arise from a moral psychology of love and familial nurture, but from a professional psychology of expertise, detachment, scientific study, and a hierarchal professional-client relationship" (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 31). Butchart and McEwan further acknowledged teachers were expected to separate between their personal feelings for particular children and professional judgments regarding classroom management. Progressive schools abandoned recitation as teaching involved groups and whole classes. Progressive schools aimed for greater movement, self-direction, activity, and learning by doing.

Progressive teachers sought to integrate discipline in instruction itself, as opposed to paddles, affection, or bureaucratic classroom practices. Progressive educators believed misbehavior stemmed from inappropriate expectations that inflexible classrooms enforced upon children such as silence, stillness, and extended attention to single tasks.

The challenge was to provide children with access to a curriculum which interested them, encouraging less structured and more active classrooms. Child-centered classrooms freed teachers from constant instruction and moral judgments were replaced with scientific, measurable, technical evaluations. (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, pp. 32-33). Butchart and McEwan maintained the increased expansion of school administration required increased supervision of teachers resulting in a concentration upon classroom management.

Progressive education added school psychologists and counselors to school bureaucracies. Psychologists and counselors introduced a therapeutic view of behavior and discipline. The therapeutic view redefined misbehavior as mental maladjustment, and called for therapeutic interventions and mental hygiene. The issue was no longer obstinacy, noncompliance, or misconduct. The issues were finding ways of removing stress, anxiety, and frustration from a child's life. Standardized testing was institutionalized and linked to ability grouping and differentiated curriculums by progressive educators. Grouping by ability, class, and race became established into the structure of classrooms and schools. Standardized testing provided a neutral, professional means of identifying the causes of discipline problems (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, pp. 33-34).

Nineteenth century disciplinary structures were expanded and standardized in the twentieth century such as report cards, promotion or retention. New structures were added that carried new disciplinary power such as consolidated schools, the endorsed extra-curriculum with its requirements for adequate grades, and compulsory attendance laws. Each affected classroom relationships and classroom management over both teachers and students. The object method changed instructional relationships in the

nineteenth century while the project method defined new classroom relationships in the Progressive Era. Child-directed projects connected to integrated curriculums were required to control classroom activity. "The child was the center, not the teacher. The child's ends and interest, not the curriculum, defined the day" (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, pp. 34-35).

Child-centered division of progressivism expected discipline to flow from the child's interests and relinquished responsibility for discipline while social reconstructionist progressives disagreed and predicted child-centered schools would produce an increase in disruptive behavior. Social reconstructionist progressives advocated classrooms structured around lessons in social responsibility to foster social consciousness. Social control issues dominated their efforts. Social reconstructionist progressive educators believed appropriate classroom management was determined from scientific criteria instead of moral or intellectual criteria. Mental hygienists made up a significant faction of the social efficiency progressives and placed all authority in the hands of psychologically trained experts whose task was to measure and regulate environments and individuals (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, pp. 35-36).

The new moral order of the twentieth century focused on the material and interests of business. Social, political, and economic power merged in the hands of the wealthy and in corporations at the expense of small producers, labor, and democratic processes. These dominant tendencies in progressivism were also presented to children, through the discipline of the schools. Butchart and McEwan, (1998, p. 37) maintained Progressivism influenced school discipline with emerging social values and rules

developed from emerging marketplace and productive relationships instead of democratic values and moral imperatives.

John Dewey was an American psychologist, educational reformer, and a major representative of progressive education and liberalism during the 20th century (1859-1952). "Dewey's philosophy marched into the classrooms of America and transformed the formal educational environment of millions of students and teachers" (Hook, 2008). This philosophy was a systematic attempt to take the pattern of scientific inquiry as a model for knowledge and action in all fields. Dewey's ideas were influential in education and social reform as he proposed the possibility of creating a disciplinary power directed toward the realization of democratic ends. Child-centered and mental hygiene tendencies in progressivism relinquished responsibility for any instruction. Dewey suggested democratic discipline, like democratic education, would reject manipulation and demands for blind obedience, seeking instead rational inquiry into morally and ethically sound exercises of personal and social authority. "A democratic notion of classroom discipline would seek self-authority influenced with a social consciousness" (Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 37).

A behaviorist approach to learning was also developing during the twentieth century. B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) and John B. Watson (1878-1958) were two main originators of behaviorist approaches to learning. Watson believed human behavior resulted from specific stimuli that elicited certain responses. Watson's basic argument stated conclusions about human development should be based on observations of evident behavior rather than assumptions about subconscious motives (Standridge, 2002).

A comprehensive view of conditioning known as operant conditioning was developed by B.F. Skinner (Standridge, 2002). Skinner was an American behaviorist who supported a mechanistic approach to classroom discipline with his stimulus-response understanding of human behavior. His model was based on the premise that satisfying responses are conditioned, while unsatisfying ones are not. Skinner suggested that behavior could be reliably controlled through the use of positive and negative reinforcement. By presenting stimuli that provide positive or negative reinforcement, teachers would be better able to shape their students' behavior. Using behaviorist theory in the classroom offered the possibility of success for both teachers and students. Students work for things that bring them positive feelings and for approval from people they admire. They change behaviors to satisfy the desires they have learned to value (Standridge, 2002). Students most often avoid behaviors associated with unpleasantness and develop habitual behaviors from those that are repeated often. The entire rationale of behavior modification is that most behavior is learned. If behaviors can be learned, they can also be unlearned or relearned (Standridge, 2002). In following a consistent schedule of specific reinforcements, making sure they are effective and efficient, teachers could control student behavior and maximize learning. This was the promise of behavior modification in schools. Behaviorist techniques resulting from the work of Watson and Skinner have long been utilized in education to promote behavior that is desirable and discourage behavior which is not desirable. Contracts, consequences, reinforcement, extinction, and behavior modification are among the methods derived from behaviorist theory for practical classroom application (Schaffer, 2000).

William J. Gnagey stated teaching and classroom discipline were interrelated (as cited in Butchart & McEwan, 1998, p. 57). He developed a mechanistic systems management orientation to teacher planning and suggested several procedures to aid teachers such as arranging the seating so surveillance is easy and frequently scanning the entire room. Gnagey also recommended routinizing activities as a way of minimizing misbehaviors. Taking roll, passing out supplies, breaking up into groups, moving from class to class are all examples of administrative operations that could be routinized. Gnagey noted student punishment might have consequences for teachers. According to Butchart & McEwan (1998, p. 37), Gnagey stated,“ although students usually do not repeat behaviors that are punished, the fear and resentment that accompanies the administration of penalties may spawn new acts of anger and revenge for the teacher to deal with”.

Charles (1985) referred to the seriousness in teaching. “Seriousness in teaching means exactly that: concern for what really matters in schooling” (p. 124). Charles defined serious teachers as those who truly valued education, learning, and the golden rule. They prepared adequately for teaching, gave their best effort, kept students on task, followed up with students, took the extra step, never gave up, and communicated well with parents. Charles believed each of these serious teacher traits influenced how students behaved and learned. Charles (1985, p. 139) maintained rules should tell students what is and what is not permitted in the classroom. They should be reasonable, positive, observable, public, enforceable, enforced, and result with appropriate consequences when broken. Charles considered modeling to account for the natural development of most social behavior and played a significant role in classroom

discipline. "Modeling is a process of teaching through example and learning through imitation. It is instrumental in the acquisition of knowledge, values, interests, attitudes, and accepted modes of behavior" (Charles,1985, p. 160).

"The early 1980's saw a growth of interest in discipline systems for use by all the teachers and students within a given school" (Charles, 1985, p. 230). This interest grew in part from the realization that individual classroom programs proved to be inconsistent which led to student confusion. Charles placed a strong emphasis on positive reinforcement of good behavior as a means of providing a calm, happy, supportive place for children to learn. At the same time students were to be taught social behaviors that would lead to successful interpersonal relations.

Canter (1990) designed a school-based guide to foster classroom management which served as a popular approach adopted by many schools. Canter stated (1990) "Students need to be taught to be responsible for their actions. They need to realize the choice is theirs: to follow the rules of the classroom and enjoy the rewards or to disregard the rules and accept the consequences" (p. 11). Assertive discipline served as a structured, systematic approach designed to assist educators in running an organized, teacher-in-charge classroom environment. Canter's Assertive Discipline plan had a series of interrelated components. First, teachers must establish rules students would be expected to follow at all times so they would know exactly what was expected of them. Canter believed in procedures with each step detailed and clearly laid out.
Canter also believed rules teachers provide for students should not only be specific but based on observable behaviors. Once the teacher's rules are clearly and firmly enunciated, students would understand which behaviors are appropriate and which are not

in that particular classroom. Canter believed the first rule of every classroom should be that students follow directions the first time they are given and there must be unambiguous consequences for students if they do not follow the teacher's rules. The Assertive Discipline approach also recognized the importance of establishing a reward system for students who follow the rules (Canter, 1990).

Glasser (1992) encouraged schools to promote success by focusing on quality and the use of Control Theory in the classroom. Glasser's theory of motivation stated behavior was not caused by an outside stimulus. Glasser contended behavior was inspired by what a person wants most at any given time. Glasser believed all behavior is intended to satisfy one of the five basic internal needs: survival, to be loved, power, freedom, and to have fun. This theory, also referred to as Choice Theory, states individuals have the power to change their lives for the better based on the choices they make. Glasser (1992) challenged teachers to make choices that would meet the basic needs of their students and of the teachers themselves.

Beyer (as cited in Butchart and McEwan, 1998, pp. 75-77) suggested teachers could bring students into the classroom decision-making process in ways that respect students' potential independence and political identity as well as their awareness of their own and larger worlds. This democratic perspective moves us away from the manipulative, often cynical perspective that has infected mainstream classroom management ideas, while recognizing that the climate of the classroom provides an important arena for reflecting on the moral, intellectual, and political life of students in the present and future. According to Beyer (as cited in Butchart and McEwan, 1998), the world of classroom management was dominated by mistrust in the sense that students

"need a taskmaster" (p. 65), if they are to function effectively in or outside of schools. It was important for students to learn to be obedient. "The result for students was a decided powerlessness, a followership that often resulted in apathy and a withdrawal of their own interests and investments" (p. 65).

Beyer contended thinking differently about classroom discipline involved teachers being able to let go of the "conventional wisdom" of teaching professionalism and classroom management (as cited in Butchart and McEwan, 1998, p. 77). Beyer continued to state a democratically organized classroom must foster the sort of community in which differences would not only be tolerated but valued, where people could share ideas without fear of rebuke or admonishment. Democratic principles mandate teachers taking risks and trusting their students. Teachers should understand students will not always do what teachers think they should, yet students should be given the chance to make mistakes and find their own ways (Butchart and McEwan, 1998).

Twenty-first century educators have aimed to maintain a warm, positive, enriched learning environment while implementing systematic discipline practices to avoid classroom chaos. Bailey (2000) wrote a comprehensive social and emotional classroom management program to empower both teachers and students. Bailey's classroom management program (2000) was based on brain research, child development information and developmentally appropriate practices. Bailey's goal was to provide systematic changes in schools by fostering the emotional intelligence of teachers first, and children second. Bailey (2000) declared teachers had been put in impossible situations of teaching students without the necessary discipline skills to address the emotional and social issues of children in today's world. Bailey's discipline model was

based on relationships which focused on a sense of community. The "school family" served as the core of the program and the family was held together through communication skills fostering safety, cooperation, and respect for each other. The Conscious Discipline model empowered adults and children to transform conflicts into opportunities to learn critical life skills.

Blankstein (2004) established the crucial need for reform in education with six main principles that guide students achievement in high-performing schools. Principle 1 stated a need for a common mission, vision, values, and goals. Principle 2 ensured achievement was needed for all students with systems for prevention and intervention. Principle 3 supported collaborative teaming focused on teaching and learning. Principle 4 utilized data to guide decision making. Principle 5 aimed to gain active engagement from family and community. The final Principle 6 focused on building a sustainable leadership capacity. Schools were thought to be established for the common good and served as an opportunity to equalize the lives and possibilities for the achievement of millions of under-served children.

According to Blankstein (2004, pp. 98-102), the real determinant of student success began with teachers creating environments which included systems to prevent failure. The needs of students were to be put first. All the systems and processes that needed to be in place to help students were examined and planned to encourage learning at a high level for all students. Blankstein's philosophy was a significant change of attitude when compared to mixtures of traditional bureaucratic and New England disciplinary pedagogy of the eighteenth century which promoted external authority such as switches and paddles to control student behavior. Ridnouer (2006) agreed with

Blankstein and declared teaching is as much about students as it is about curriculum. "Caring is a bridge to whatever a student defines as success. Frustration, hostility, confusion, and hatred are bridges to failure" (p. 27).

Curwin, Mendler, and Mendler (2008) wrote a book to help teachers support students in managing individual behavior choices. This approach to managing a classroom promoted respect for self and others as it emphasized relationship building, curriculum relevance, and academic success. The emphasis was on preventing problems by helping students to understand each other, work well together, and develop responsibility for their action. The authors also included intervention strategies for handling common and severe problems in dignified ways.

Levin and Nolan stated there was a direct relationship between teaching and classroom discipline and teachers needed to be systematic in developing and implementing efficient plans of discipline strategies. "Teachers have the professional responsibility for assuming the role of instructional leader, which involves employing techniques that maximize student on-task behavior" (as cited in Butchart & McEwan, 1998, pp. 55, 56). Levin and Nolan stated the ability of teachers to change students' behavior was increased when teachers received professional knowledge of instructional techniques, learning psychology and child development. In addition, these authors argued students' behaviors would change if the teacher's behavior changed in a conscious, deliberate way (as cited in Butchart & McEwan, 1998, pp. 56).

Belvel (2010) created a classroom leadership model of prevention, intervention, and problem solving for both teachers and students. This model has served as a comprehensive approach that encourages teachers to reevaluate their beliefs, roles, and

practices in addition to engaging students as partners in creating a powerfully supportive learning environment. The author aimed to explain how integrating leadership rather than management, into daily classroom life increased learning by strengthening students' independence, self-esteem, and interdependence with others. The author encouraged teachers to become mentors and facilitators, rather than classroom managers. Students were empowered to actively participate, plan, and evaluate their own learning.

Bailey (2011) the founder of Loving Guidance, Inc., (a company dedicated to creating positive environments for children, families, schools, and families) identified self-regulation as the ability to manage emotional upset and behavior. She stated the way adults handle their own emotional upset when children are throwing fits, back talking, name-calling, being defiant, and withdrawing will either foster or inhibit their ability to develop self-regulation. Bailey published the book, *Conscious Discipline* (2000), which is "a comprehensive social and emotional intelligence classroom management program that empowers both teachers and students". Bailey's system of discipline was built on three major premises. The first premise states changing ourselves is possible and has profound impact on others. Bailey focused on helping teachers change old discipline methods that are not working and learn new skills to understand and deal with inappropriate behaviors in a positive manner. The second premise stated connectedness governs behavior. Positive, trusting relationships with students, staff, and parents are crucial to change inappropriate behaviors and support appropriate behavior choices. The third premise stated conflict is an opportunity to teach. All three of Bailey's premises concur with the goals of SWPBS which support current trends in discipline that focus on teaching appropriate behaviors with positive supports for students so they can learn and

live productively in society. Both systems point out a need for teachers to change old negative discipline patterns and focus on positive ways of responding to student misbehaviors.

This section of chapter two examined the history of school discipline beginning in the U.S. colonial period up to the twenty-first century. The following section of chapter two explains theories defining the use of school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) which is a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior (Sugai et al., 2010).

Theories Defining School-Wide Positive Behavior Support

The foundations of school-wide positive behavior supports were presented by Colvin and Sugai (2010), from the OSEP Center on PBIS at the 1992 University of Oregon conference. This early conference topic consisted of five major sections which included teaching specific appropriate and acceptable behavior, school-wide efforts, precorrections, positive reinforcement and occurrence of office discipline referrals (ODR) data. The term, precorrection, referred to the process of identifying and analyzing settings in which problem behavior could most likely be triggered along with the function of the behavior. Expected and acceptable behaviors would be identified. The setting would then be modified to reteach acceptable behavior to student/s. The process involved a cyclical progression of reteaching, reminding, reinforcing, and redirecting students until acceptable behaviors were visible (Colvin and Sugai, 2010).

Data sources for office discipline referral (ODR) evaluation were the School-wide Information System (SWIS) and the Common Core of Data provided by the U.S.

Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). SWIS consisted of a web-based application that allowed school personnel to record, track, and use office referral data to make data-based decisions for behavior support at individual-student, student-group, and school-wide levels. ODR data from SWIS users who agreed to share their data for research purposes became part of an extensive database housed at the University of Oregon (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005).

Project PREPARE was disclosed in 1993 and focused on preparing schools for the implementation of school-wide behavior supports (Colvin, & Sugai; PBIS Blueprint, 2010). Project PREPARE activated a checklist determining the adequacy of existing school-wide discipline plans. Schools interested in implementing SWPBS completed the checklist which consisted of YES or NO answers to nine strategic questions dealing with SWPBS implementation. If YES responses were greater than six, existing programs were maintained with plans to address any inadequacies. If YES answers were less than six, Project PREPARE was implemented which gave additional support to school staff for SWPBS development. The authors shared a significant challenge to the program was changing teacher behavior. SWPBS required an instruction approach to problem behavior, team-based action planning, and the use of ODR data.

Schools were considered to be the important change agents for discipline. School-wide discipline plans that focused on teaching appropriate behaviors at a coordinated three-tiered prevention model for all students were advocated and modeled. Integrated evidence-based practices were shared and taught to staff and students. ODR data was utilized to confirm progress (Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker, & Kaufman, 1996). SWPBS was described to be 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.

The emphasis of school-wide systems of support included proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behavior to create positive school environments. A continuum of positive behavior support for all students within a school was implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (hallways, buses, lunchrooms, playgrounds, and restrooms). SWBPS served as a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occurs (Sugai et al., 2010).

The continuum of school-wide instructional and positive behavior supports were divided into a multi-level approach offered to all students in a school. Attention was focused on creating and sustaining primary (school-wide), secondary (classroom), and tertiary (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results for all children by making targeted inappropriate behaviors less effective and desired behavior more functional (US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs [USDOE OSEP], 2012). The primary tier of prevention support is school-wide for all students, staff and settings. The secondary tier or prevention support is aimed at specialized groups with systems for students with at-risk behavior. The tertiary tier of prevention support is specialized and individualized with systems for students with high-risk behavior.

SWPBS emphasized the introducing, modeling, and reinforcing of positive social behavior as an important step in every students' educational experience. Research has

shown that the implementation of punishment in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective (USDOE OSEP, 2012). SWPBS supporters aimed to teach behavioral expectations and reward students for following set expectations in lieu of waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding with a punishing consequence.

A systems approach in SWPBS encompassed a group of individuals (the entire school staff) who work together to achieve a common goal (USDOE OSEP, 2012). The process emphasized the creation of systems that support the adoption and implementation of evidence-based practices and procedures while fitting it in with the particular school's culture and reform efforts. SWPBS focused on four key elements which included outcomes, data, practices, and systems. *Outcomes* referred to academic and behavior targets endorsed and emphasized by educators, staff, families, and students. Each learning community was expected to decide what was important to them. *Practices* referred to the interventions and strategies that were evidence based. The school community was required to decide how they would reach the goals they make. *Data* was information used to identify status, need for change, and the results of interventions. The school community was required to decide what data they would utilize to support their successes or challenges. *Systems* referred to the supports needed to enable the accurate and stable implementation of the practices of SWPBS. The school community was expected to determine what durable systems could be implemented that would sustain over the long haul.

Related Research on SWPBS

A research case study analysis of a school-wide discipline plan was studied at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Ellis (2002) found academic performance of

students at the targeted school improved during the four years of the study. In addition, teacher, parent, and student attitudes were positive about the target school being a safe and secure place to learn.

According to Washburn, Stowe, Cole, and Robinson (2007), "Most studies in the PBS literature indicated a significant decrease in the number of ODR's" Washburn et al., (2007) presented results from studies by Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006; McCurdy, Mannella, & Eldridge, 2003; McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Boland, & Good, 2006; and Taylor-Greene, & Kartub, 2000; which suggested SWPBS is an effective approach for reducing problem behavior and developing an overall positive school climate. In addition to decreases in office discipline referrals, studies indicated implementation of PBS can significantly reduce suspensions as well as reduce the occurrence of the most serious offenses, such as student assaults (Washburn et al., 2007, p 3).

Washburn et al., (2007) reported that forty-one states had developed state-wide initiatives to support large-scale implementation of SWPBS. Many of these states, followed recommendations from the OSEP Technical Assistance Center on PBIS, and established state and district leadership teams, created coaches and trainer networks, secured funding, required evaluation of implementation and outcomes, and created dissemination strategies. State initiatives generally, involved partnerships between State Departments of Education, Mental Health, Juvenile Justice, and universities.

School-wide Positive Behavior Program Challenges

The authors of the SWPBS Blueprint (Sugai et al., 2010) shared a significant challenge to the SWPBS program was changing teacher behavior. Studies on reducing problem behavior in schools frequently focus on changes in student behavior as the

primary outcome measure of intervention effectiveness. While the ultimate goal may be to reduce problem behavior and increase positive social behaviors in students, the fact remains that teacher behavior ultimately needs to change first to produce changes in student behavior. Classroom management, therefore, provides the structure to support teacher behavior and increase the success of classroom practices. Oliver, Wehby, and Reschly (2011) stated adequate teacher preparation is an important first step in providing content knowledge and opportunities to develop proficiency in classroom management.

Authors of the SWPBS Blueprint (Sugai et al., 2010) affirmed the need for school staff to shift from a reactive and aversive approach to managing problem behavior to one that is preventive and positive. To accomplish this shift in approach, schools must work to change the mindset of the staff to support all students with behavior support. School staff need to believe every child entering school requires behavior support to some degree (Sugai et al., 2010). In addition, the authors addressed integrating academic and behavioral success for all students and emphasized prevention in establishing and maintaining safe and supportive school climates. Priority should be given to practical validated systems and procedures that demonstrate effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance for students. Prevention should be emphasized in establishing and maintaining safe and supportive school climates. Collaboration among multiple community support systems (i.e., education, juvenile justice, community mental health, family, and medical) should be increased. The focus is to build a school environment where team building and problem solving skills were expected, taught, and reinforced (Sugai et al., 2010).

The implementation guidelines of SWPBS (Sugai et al., 2010) included several challenges. The first is to select effective, efficient, and relevant evidence-based

outcomes for each specific individual school community. The next challenge is to establish a systems level infrastructure to support scaled implementation of evidence-based outcomes. The third major challenge is to arrange for accurate, sustained, and generalized local implementation of evidence-based outcomes.

According to Sugai, et al., (2010), implementing SWPBS reinforces social competence and academic achievement with outcomes consisting of systems, data, and practices to support staff behavior, student behavior and decision making. Effective implementation was described as interactive, informing, and involved stakeholders at multiple levels (student, classroom, school, district, state). The authors of the SWPBS Blueprint (Sugai et al., 2010) stated implementation progressed through four phases. The first phase, called *exploration*, identifies the support needs, priorities, agreements, resources and outcomes of a particular school community. *Demonstration* is the second implementation phase which reveals and validates the local adoption and implementation of the first phase with reliability, outcome documentation, and visibility. The third phase, called *elaboration*, refers to the adapted, accurate and documented program replication, outcomes, and leadership support. The fourth and final stage is labeled *continuous regeneration* which refers to systems adoption, implementation capacity, durability, planned scale-ups, progress monitoring and efficiency adaptations.

The authors of the SWPBS Blueprint (Sugai et al., 2010) describe implementation success is based on the multiple criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, scalability and being defendable. Effectiveness describes the desired outcomes and whether the outcomes are met. Efficiency portrays how doable the implementation is by local implementers. Relevance is described as the culturally and

contextually appropriateness of the implementation. Sustainability is defined as the lasting implementation and durable outcomes. Scalability is identified as the range of application to various disciplines. Defendable refers to how conceptually sound and theoretically logical the implementation practices were for success. Four main data concerns for all persons involved in SWPBS are student outcomes, practice selection, practice implementation, and lastly, progress monitoring and systems integration.

Sugai et al., (2010) justify the process of setting up evidence-based intervention practices to be challenging as it encompasses five specific areas that require acceptance, support and consistent intervention responses from all staff (school-wide support, classroom support, individual student support, non-classroom area support, and family engagement). School-wide intervention practices require a leadership team, behavior purpose statement, set of positive expectations and behaviors, procedures for teaching school-wide and classroom-wide expected behavior, a continuum of procedures for encouraging expected behavior, a continuum of procedures for discouraging rule violations, and procedures for on-going data-based monitoring and evaluation.

Classroom evidence-based intervention practices are required school-wide with maximum structure and predictability in routines and environment. Classroom practices have positively stated expectations posted which were taught, reviewed, prompted, and supervised. Maximum engagement is provided through high rates of opportunities to respond with delivery of evidence-based instructional curriculum and practices. A continuum of strategies is made available to acknowledge displays of appropriate behavior, in addition to a continuum of strategies for responding to inappropriate behavior. Non-classroom evidence-based intervention practices consist of positive

expectations and routines taught and encouraged throughout the school related areas with active supervision by all staff. Precorrections and reminders are given as needed with positive reinforcement (Sugai et al., 2010).

In addition, Sugai et al, (2010) explains individual student evidence-based intervention practices include behavioral competencies at school and district levels, function-based behavior support planning, team and data-based decision making, comprehensive person-centered planning, targeted social skills with self-management instruction, and individualize instructional and curricular accommodations. Family engagement evidence-based intervention practices are a continuum of positive behavior support for all families. Frequent, regular positive contacts, communications, and acknowledgements are provided. Formal and active participation and involvement as equal partners in the education setting is encouraged with access to the school community resources.

SWPBS requires the implementation of supports to be systemic (Sugai et al, 2010). The leadership team is a strategic force compelled to be visible, effective and functional. Existing informational data required review and analyzing to prioritize issues in need of support. Measureable outcomes are specified to directly relate to issue and context. Evidence-based practices are selected to achieve specified outcomes. Supports are provided for accurate adoption and sustained implementation. Implementation practice was monitored for progress toward outcomes and practice implementation was modified based on the analysis of progress data. Implementation decisions are based on student responsiveness to intervention (RTI) and are team-based utilizing a strategic action planning process.

Relationship Between School Climate and School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports

The National School Board Association (Gemberling, Smith, & Villani, 2000) has maintained climate is a reflection of perceptions and feelings of the staff, parents, and students that make up the school community. Climate serves as a representation of an organization's culture, which influenced how people communicated, interacted, and solved problems. A positive climate results from leadership that appreciated and publicly valued the role that each person in the organization played. One organizational strategy that places clear value on the individual is employee empowerment.

Armstrong (2012) stated teacher job satisfaction has dropped dramatically from 59% of teachers very satisfied with their jobs in 2009 to 44% in 2011. This drop represented the lowest level of teacher satisfaction in the past 24 years (p. 2). Armstrong found research from the *Project on the Next Generation of Teachers* at the Harvard Graduate School of Education which examined how working conditions predicted teachers' job satisfaction. According to Johnson, Kraft, and Papay (as cited in Armstrong, 2012) the Harvard project made a link between teacher satisfaction and growth in student achievement and found conditions most important for teacher satisfaction were the ones that shaped the social context of teaching and learning.

Johnston, Kraft, & Papay found the "three most important elements for teacher satisfactions were collegial relationships, the principal's leadership, and school culture" (as cited in Armstrong, 2012). The school culture was characterized by mutual trust, respect, collaboration, and commitment to student achievement. Teacher leaders had the potential to affect collegial relationships and create a culture of trust, respect, openness, and commitment to student achievement. Teachers were given the ability to set

professional goals for themselves and contribute to the learning in a safe learning environment.

The Baldrige National Quality Program has served as a United States public-private partnership dedicated to performance excellence and has provided organizational assessment tools, criteria, and educated leaders in businesses, schools, health care organizations, government and nonprofit agencies (National Institute of Standards and Technology [NIST], 2010, 2012). The Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence provides a valuable framework which provides assistance to school communities for measuring school climate, staff and student productivity, improving student performance, and collaborative planning to achieve strategic improvement goals. The Criteria encompassed three important roles in strengthening United States education (National Institute of Standards and Technology, 2009-2010, p. 51). The first role is to help improve organizational performance practices, capabilities, and results of student achievement. The second role is to facilitate the communication and sharing of information on best practices among education organizations and among U.S. organizations of all types. The third role serves as a working tool for understanding and managing performance and for guiding organizational planning and opportunities for learning (NIST, 2009-2010).

According to the report of the *Education Criteria for Performance Excellence* (NIST, 2009-2010) "an organization's success depends increasingly on an engaged workforce that benefits from meaningful work, clear organizational direction, performance accountability, and has a safe, trusting, and cooperative environment. Successful organizations capitalize on diverse backgrounds, knowledge, skills, creativity,

and the motivation of its workforce and partners" (p. 53). Key requirements for success include provisions for regular communication among workers, approaches to evaluating progress, adapting to changing conditions, continued education and training, and understanding the short and long term factors that affect individual learning communities and the education market. Key stakeholders include students, school staff, parents, employers, workforce suppliers, partners, and the public. The guidelines of the *Education Criteria for Performance Excellence* (NIST, 2009-2010) support a systems perspective to maintaining a school-wide organization goal alignment which complimented the systems approach of SWPBS.

School culture has been defined as the belief system which directly influences school climate (Mifflen, 2008). Students feel comfortable, valued, accepted, wanted and secure in a positive environment where they can interact with people whom they trust. Climate reflects the positive or negative feelings toward the school environment. School culture refers to the manner in which teachers and staff members work together, while school climate refers more toward the school's effects on students. School culture denotes the values, practices, and structure within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Freiber and Stein (as cited in Bucher & Manning, 2005) claimed "school climate is the heart and soul of a school. It can foster resilience or become a risk factor" (p. 59).

Gemberling, Smith & Villani (2000) affirmed "Climate and the learning environment set the state for teaching and learning. Both the overall climate of a school and the specific learning environment of an individual classroom have enormous influence on student achievement" (p. 55). These authors further stated a fundamental

assumption of quality education has been that children and staff must have a safe place in which to learn and work (p. 55). Creating and sustaining safe environments serve as a necessary first step to a positive school climate. Suspensions and other disciplinary data serve as additional sources of information about school climate. Data can be utilized and analyzed for the identification of negative behavior patterns and improvement opportunities. Consistency of treatment of students and consequences for specific behaviors are important to be analyzed. Exposing the conditions most likely to create disorderly or dangerous behavior can serve as a first step in altering the climate of a school. A school district's capacity to provide diverse programs to meet the needs of students requiring additional or alternative settings to be successful served as an additional measure of climate (Gemberling, Smith, & Villani, 2000). These authors also contended the perceptions of the people who make up the organization serve as important information for school districts to analyze. Some questions to explore were: "Do the workers share a sense of ownership for the shared vision? Are they proud of the work they do? Do they have ideas for improving that work? Are they proud of the organization and committed to its success?" (Gemberling, Smith, & Villani, 2000, p. 57).

Oliver, Wehby, & Reschly (2011) stated teachers who experience difficulty controlling classroom behavior have higher stress and burnout and find it difficult to meet the instructional demands of the classroom. Effective approaches to managing the classroom environment are necessary to establish environments that support student behavior and the learning process as well as to reduce teacher stress and burnout. Sugai, along with colleagues Simonsen and Negron promoted a continuum of positive behavior supports for all students including children who require highly individualized

interventions (as cited in McClure, 2011). These experts suggested schools can support classroom teachers with SWPBS by focusing on prevention; using multiple data sources to develop strategies for screening, identification, and treatment; and taking a comprehensive, coordinated, school-wide approach to reducing problem behaviors among students.

According to the U S Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs [USDOE OSEP], 2013, (School section).

> The purpose of SWPBS was to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior was the norm. In the past, school-wide discipline has focused mainly on reacting to specific student misbehavior by implementing punishment-based strategies, including reprimands, los of privileges, office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions. Research has shown that the implementation of punishment, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Introducing , modeling, and reinforcing positive social behavior is an important step of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. (Schools section)

McClure (2011), noted Sugai and colleagues reviewed studies supporting SWPBS and found several studies which associated SWPBS with decreases in office discipline referrals and increases in the consistency and positive interactions among school staff. School staffs implementing SWPBS developed and endeavored to consistently enforce school-wide rules that were clear, broad-based, and fair (USDOE OSEP, 2012). Entire

school-wide staffs worked to develop rules and procedures collaboratively for their individual learning communities. The climate of each learning community is different; therefore, a standard approach is less effective than interventions based on the needs of the school (USDOE OSEP, 2012). Rules and procedures were clearly communicated to all persons involved in individual learning communities with clear expectations that were to be followed consistently by everyone. Intervention data was regularly gathered to support and/or serve as a basis for program adjustments (Scott, White, & Algozzine, 2009).

Office discipline referrals have been utilized to examine discipline referral rates and patterns to search for SWPBS influence on school climate (Riffel, 2009). Schools were asked to identify major problem events and minor problem events. The following five key questions were asked by Riffel (2009) when examining discipline referrals.

- How often were the problem behavior events occurring?
- Where are they happening?
- What types of problem behaviors are observed and reported?
- When are the problems occurring?
- Who or what is contributing to the problems? (pp. 22-23)

Office referrals reflected overt rule violators. A concern to the value of office referrals to the school climate depended on the consistency of implementation and the agreement between staff and administration on office-managed behaviors versus classroom-managed behavior (Riffel, 2009, pp. 20-26).

Riffel (2009, p. 23) stated examples of staff managed (minor) behaviors were tardiness, violation of classroom expectations, inappropriate language, classroom

disruptions, minor safety violation, lying, cheating, unpreparedness, and no homework or materials. Examples of office-managed (major) behaviors were repeated minor behaviors, insubordination, abusive/inappropriate language, harassment, intimidation, fighting, physical aggression, safety violations, vandalism, property destruction, plagiarism, theft, blatant disrespect, and illegal behaviors. The location of misbehaviors (hallway, cafeteria, library, restroom, office, parking, classroom, bus, special event, common area, art room, playground, gym) was important to document along with the possible behavior motivators for students.

As previously stated, the purpose of SWPBS was to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior was the norm (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 2012). SWBPS envelopes a safe, inclusive school climate respectful of diverse individuals with systems of behavioral interventions which support behavioral, social, and academic learning. Teachers together with school staff, may utilize SWPBS to implement a continuum of research-based strategies based upon a knowledge base of effective behavior strategies. There is also inclusion of school climate concerns in state "Race to the Top" applications and Title I guidelines proposed by President Obama's administration (U.S. Department of Education, 2011). "Like improving air quality for our general health, improving school climate supports learning" (as cited in Mather, 2010, slide 7). The National School Climate Standards defined school climate as the "patterns of people's experiences of school life which reflect the norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, and leadership practices, as well as the organizational structures that comprise school life" (as cited in Mather, 2010, slide 6).

The National School Climate Standards have offered a framework for understanding, evaluating, and improving school climate in multiple dimensions (Mather, 2010, slide 7). The framework encompasses the following five core national climate standards. The first standard promotes the development of a shared vision and plan by gathering disaggregated climate data. The second endorses developing policies to promote learning and systems to address barriers to learning. The third standard focused on promoting practices to enhance learning and student engagement. The fourth standard upholds creating welcoming, safe, and supportive environments. The fifth standard promotes social/civic responsibilities and a commitment to social justice. Based on the above information, the Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence, School-wide Positive Behavior Supports, and the National School Climate Standards all support each other's goals and target the improvement of student learning in a positive, supportive, and safe climate respectful of diverse individuals.

Summary of the Literature Review

The purpose of chapter two was to provide a brief history of school discipline, define theories of SWPBS, explore related research, note challenges of SWPBS, investigate necessary steps needed to successfully implement SWPBS, outline benefits of SWPBS to the school community, and explore the relationship of school climate to SWPBS. The following chapter three, presents the research design, population, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, limitations, and a chapter summary.

Chapter Three

Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine if school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) was a viable alternative for Olathe district schools to improve behavior and academic outcomes for all students. The study also examined the relationship between SWPBS and school climate surveys to determine if there was a positive increase in school climate scores with the utilization of SWPBS. This chapter describes the methodology used in conducting the research study. Included in this chapter are a description of the research design, population, and sample of the students studied. Detailed information related to the sampling process, data collection, data analysis, hypothesis testing, and the limitations of the study are provided.

Research Design

A mixed methods quantitative and qualitative research design was utilized for this study. The quantitative portion of the study involved student behavior incidents documented by office referrals, in-and-out-of-school suspensions, student academic scores, and employee school climate survey results. This researcher analyzed and compared school office referrals, in-and-out-of school suspension data from 0 to 3 years of SWPBS implementation. The quantitative portion of this study included three dependent variables. The first dependent variable involved archival data consisting of office referrals and school suspensions which were documented incidents of inacceptable behaviors in Schools A, B, and C gathered during four consecutive years beginning the year prior to SWPBS. A second dependent variable was student academic growth, which was measured as the difference in scale scores on district state assessments in reading and

math during the first three consecutive years of SWPBS implementation. The third dependent variable consisted of Olathe District climate scores gathered during four consecutive years beginning the year prior to SWPBS. The independent variable for this portion of the study was the number of years students had been exposed to SWPBS.

The qualitative portion of this study involved interviewing teachers and administrators for their perceptions of change in student behavior, academic scores, and school climate after implementing SWPBS. The same dependent variables listed in the quantitative portion of the study were included in the qualitative portion of the study (documented office referrals and school suspensions, district state assessment scores in reading and math, and district school climate scores). Interviews revealed principal and teacher perceptions of change as a result of SWPBS during four consecutive years beginning the year prior to SWPBS.

Population and Sample

The student population used for the quantitative sample included students from each of three schools A, B, and C in the Olathe School District. School B was a smaller elementary school with a transient population. A total of 93 students from schools A, B, and C had attended the schools for four consecutive years (the first year prior to three consecutive years of implementing SWPBS) and were chosen for the research population sample. Table 1 describes the cohort identification for participants of the study from the Olathe School District.

Table 1

Cohort Identification for Participants of the study from the Olathe School District

	Pre SWPBS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
School A	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
School B	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
School C	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011

Two teachers and the principal from each school were interviewed for the qualitative sample which then consisted of a total of three principals and six teachers.

Sampling Procedures

In this study, the researcher used purposive sampling to identify participants. Johnson and Christensen (2008) defined purposive sampling as the researcher specifying the characteristics of the population of interest and locating individuals with those characteristics. The first established criterion for participation in the study was the selection of three elementary schools, School A, School B, and School C. Each school had implemented SWPBS for three consecutive years. The principal at each school was involved during the entire four year process beginning the year prior to the implementation of SWPBS. Due to movement and change of teaching and work assignments, the staff underwent changes during the four year process. The second criterion established in the study was a cohort of 93 purposive selected students who attended each elementary school over four years with the first year prior to SWPBS. To be included in the sample, the students had to have attended each selected elementary

school for four consecutive years, beginning the year prior to SWPBS implementation. A third criterion established in the study was the collection of district climate scores from each of the three selected elementary schools in the study over four years with the first year prior to SWPBS. A fourth criterion was interviews gathered from a purposive sampling of two teachers and principal from each elementary school who agreed to an interview about their perceptions of the effects of SWPBS.

Instrumentation

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) stated instrumentation is critical to descriptive research. The researcher chose to utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods in the research to determine effects of SWPBS on three Olathe District elementary schools. The following sections include information about the quantitative and qualitative instrumentation, measurement, reliability, and validity of the research.

Quantitative Instrumentation. The quantitative portion of the study involved three variables. The first variable consisted of student behavior incidents documented as office referrals and in-and-out-of-school suspensions. The second variable was academic achievement as measured by student reading and math scores on the Kansas State Assessment. The third variable was school climate as measured by employee responses to the Annual Olathe District Climate Survey. The following section details the measurement of each of the variables.

Measurement. Office referrals were documented by each elementary principal on a district web based dashboard. The documentation included the student's name, time, location, referring teacher, and type of behavior/conduct offense. A Code of Student

Conduct had been adopted by the Board of Education for the Olathe District Schools to provide a safe and orderly learning environment (Olathe Public Schools 233, 2009, pp. 1-37). The researcher examined all office referrals and in-and-out-of-school suspensions documented by the principals of three selected elementary schools to determine if significant changes occurred in the number of student offenses among 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of students exposed to SWPBS.

Two types of offenses (Class 1 and Class 2 offenses) are documented by school principals. Class 1 offenses are violations of general school rules and/or school disruptions. These offenses typically do not require a police report. Class 1 offenses are a failure to comply with or follow general rules of conduct or procedures as determined by individual schools and as outlined in the school Student Handbooks, informational folders, handouts, posters, and posted school signage. A failure to comply with established procedures disrupts the safe and orderly educational process. Class 1 offenses include violations of general school rules and/or school disruption, excessive tardiness, use of profane language, inappropriate dress, and academic dishonesty (Olathe Public Schools 233, 2009, p. 8). Class 1 offenses completed in an elementary school may result in an in-school conference with a student, individual student behavior support plan, detention(s), parent/guardian conference, in-school suspension, or a short-term out of school suspension (Olathe Public Schools 233, 2009, p. 9).

Class 2 offenses include verbal abuse or threats, inciting to fight, battery, general noncompliance, vandalism, stealing, gambling, extortion, contributing to a disruptive situation, bullying, defiance of authority, incendiary devices, incorrigible conduct, impermissible driving to school, possession or exhibition of obscene literature or

material, misuse of computer or violation of network practices, skipping class or school, leaving school or school activity without permission, tobacco-possession, use, sale or distribution of drugs, harassment, and trespassing. Each principal has the authority to use discretion and common sense in enforcing the Code of Student conduct. The principal is authorized by district policy and state statutes to apply a higher level of consequence for serious violations of the Code even if it is a student's first offense (Olathe Public Schools 233, 2009, pp.11-12). Class 2 offenses completed in an elementary school may result in an in-school conference with a student, individual student behavior support plan, detention(s), review of bus privilege, parent/guardian conference, individual behavior plan, in-school suspension, suspensions or forfeiture of access to computer privilege, short-term out of school suspension, loss of bus privilege, or long-term out of school suspension (Olathe Public Schools 233, 2009, p. 14).

Poggio, Yang, Irwin, Glasnapp, & Poggio (University of Kansas, 2007) explained the purpose of the 2006 Kansas Assessments in Reading and Mathematics was to provide aggregate state accountability and annual yearly progress (AYP) information toward meeting the Kansas Curriculum Standards in the tested areas as required by the *No Child Left Behind* federal mandate. Scores on the Kansas Assessments in Reading and Mathematics provided building and district information to support school improvement evaluation needs as appropriate; and to report on the performance of students to support instructional planning for individuals and groups as judged appropriate by local educators. The test was written to assess all 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students in the state of Kansas (The Kansas State Department of Education Standards, 2007-8). Students in all three selected elementary schools completed the Kansas state assessments on line.

The item format for the Kansas Reading Assessment was multiple-choice with one correct answer to be selected from four response options (A, B, C, D). Two standards existed within the reading standards document. Each standard included benchmarks and specific grade level indicators for each benchmark. Four to eight test items were established per indicator. Reading selections were based on text types identified as appropriate in the grade level test specifications. According to Poggio, Yang, Irwin, Glasnapp, and Poggio (2007), authors of the Kansas Assessments in Reading and Mathematics 2006 technical manual, *Standard 1: The student reads and comprehends text across the curriculum;* contains four benchmarks which measure the ability of students to use skills to construct meaning from text, read fluently, expand vocabulary, and comprehend a variety of text (narrative, expository, technical, and persuasive). *Standard 2: The student responds to a variety of text*; contains two benchmarks which measure the ability of students to use literary concepts to interpret and respond to text and understand the significance of literature and its contributions to various cultures. The standards definitions are the same for each grade level, however, the scope of the benchmarks and amount of indicators change.

(Poggio, et al., 2007) stated Kansas State Math Assessments followed the same multiple choice pattern of testing with specific benchmarks for each grade level. Four basic standards were addressed within the math standards document: Numbers and Computation, Algebra, Geometry, and Data/Probability/Statistics. The first standard, Numbers and Computation, contained four benchmarks which measure the ability of students to use number sense, the number system properties, estimation, and computation. The second standard, Algebra, contained four benchmarks which measure

the ability of students to use variables, equations, inequalities functions, and models. The third standard, Geometry, contained four benchmarks which measure the ability of students to use geometric figures and their properties, measurement and estimation, transformational geometry, and geometry from an algebraic perspective. The fourth and final standard, Data/Probability/Statistics, contained two benchmarks which measure the ability of students to use probability and statistics. The standards definitions remained the same across grade levels, however, the scope of the benchmarks changed. Twelve to fifteen indicators were assessed per grade level with four to eight test items per indicator. There was not a time limit given for the assessments (Poggio et al., 2007).

Separate assessments were developed by the state and made available as an alternative for administering the general assessments to students with moderate and severe disabilities. The Kansas Assessment of Multiple Measures (KAMM), which consists of single forms to measure targeted learning outcomes in each of the reading and mathematics content areas, were developed for students with moderate disabilities. The Kansas Alternate Assessment (KAA) System, which was developed for students with severe disabilities, individualizes the assessment for a particular student and his/her individual education plan (IEP). Students who do not qualify for an IEP, yet require differentiation, are given opportunities to read their tests aloud or take the test in a quiet location under the stipulation that the differentiation utilized, is one that is consistently applied during their daily class instruction. Student scores are reported by the state in five basic categories from highest to lowest: Exemplary, Exceeds Standard, Meets Standard, Approaches Standard, and Academic Warning (Poggio et al., 2007).

The third component of the quantitative portion of this study included a climate survey utilized by the Olathe School District which was adapted from the Baldrige National Quality Program Education Criteria for Performance Excellence (2009-10). The Baldrige Program is a United States public-private partnership dedicated to performance excellence and provides organizational assessment tools, criteria, and educates leaders in businesses, schools, health care organizations, government and nonprofit agencies. The value in applying the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence is in using a validated framework to assess an organization's performance.

The Olathe School District adapted and modified the climate benchmarks utilized by the Baldrige National Quality Program to make it a school friendly survey which included questions specific to a school setting. The Olathe climate survey was given to all certified and classified school employees electronically. The survey was anonymous and took approximately twenty minutes. A process bar at the bottom of each electronic page displayed the percentage of survey completed as each staff member proceeded through the process. The survey consisted of eighteen sub sections including the introduction which explained the survey process to each employee. The climate survey consisted of the following sub sections: Tenure, Position, Location, Position Type, Demographics, Education Level, Overall Job Satisfaction, Leadership, Strategic Planning, Student Stakeholder & Market Focus, Human Resource Factors, Pay & Benefits, Process Management, Educational & Organizational Results, Diversity, District Operations Quality Review for Budget & Finance, District Operations Quality Review for Technology, and District Operations Quality Review for Human Resources. The researcher chose to investigate six specific questions taken from the Olathe District

Climate Survey that dealt with climate and job satisfaction. The climate survey questions have been highlighted and can be found in Appendix D.

Reliability and Validity. Reliability is the degree to which an instrument consistently measures whatever it is measuring. It requires demonstrating the operations of a study can be repeated with the same results (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). The Kansas assessments in Reading and Mathematics were planned, developed, and administered by authors Poggio, Yang, Irwin, Glasnapp, and Poggio (2007). WestEd served as the contractor for the development of test items based on test specification provided by the Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE). The Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation (CETE) at the University of Kansas served as the contractor for all other aspects of the program. Students in grades 3-8 were tested in Reading and Mathematics. Students tested included regular education students, gifted students, students with disabilities, and English language learners (ELL). The spring 2006 administration of the Kansas assessments served as the baseline for the new cycle of state assessments and were newly developed to measure new targeted indicators (learning outcomes) in the most recent editions of the Kansas Curricular Standards for the content areas.

The Kansas assessments serve as curricular and instructional targets in Kansas K-12 schools. Assessments have been called upon to provide information to contribute to ongoing school accreditation status. Results from the reading and mathematics assessments have a primary role in monitoring annual yearly progress (AYP) as part of the federally mandated *No Child Left Behind* assessment requirements. To relate to accountability demands, cut scores on each test were determined to classify students into one of five performance categories (Exemplary, Exceeds Standard, Meets Standard,

Approaches Standard, and Academic Warning). The proportion of students classified in these categories becomes a primary source of information in determining AYP for schools, districts, and the state.

Researchers Poggio, Yang, Irwin, Glasnapp, and Poggio (2007), from WestEd and the Center for Education for Testing and Evaluation at the University of Kansas, found descriptive statistics for equating samples obtained in reading indicated reliability factors ranging from 0.88 to 0.92. Table 2 on the following page demonstrates the reliability analysis for grades three, four, and five in reading. The summary of equating descriptive statistics for equating samples in mathematics ranged from 0.91 to 0.93 .

Table 2 demonstrates the reliability analysis for grades three, four, and five in Reading. The reliability statistics for equating samples in reading ranged from 0.88 to 0.92.

Table 2

Reliability Analysis Descriptive Statistics for Reading

Grade	Form	Items used for sample	*N*	Reliability (α)
3	386	58	15997	0.90
3	386	58	4479	0.88
3	522	58	4476	0.89
3	558	58	4475	0.91
3	559	58	4446	0.88
4	404	74	13504	0.92
4	404	74	5142	0.91
4	561	74	5169	0.92
4	562	74	5136	0.91
4	563	74	5117	0.92
5	389	74	13038	0.92
5	388	74	7129	0.91
5	565	74	3177	0.91
5	566	74	7098	0.88
5	565	74	3952	0.89

Note: Adapted from the *Kansas Assessments in Reading and Mathematics Technical Manual for the Kansas General Assessments,* by Kansas University Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, 2007.

Table 3 demonstrates the reliability analysis for grades three, four, and five in Mathematics. Reliability coefficients ranged from 0.91 to 0.93. Information indicates all forms across grade levels provide strong evidence for reliability of the math assessments.

Table 3

Reliability Analysis Descriptive Statistics for Math

Grade	Test ID	Items used for sample	*N*	Reliability (α)
3	405	70	14657	0.93
3	405	70	3949	0.92
3	664	70	3912	0.92
3	665	69	3895	0.92
3	666	70	3913	0.91
3	669	70	3891	0.91
4	595	73	12005	0.92
4	595	73	4502	0.92
4	670	72	4479	0.91
4	671	73	4431	0.92
4	672	72	4459	0.92
4	673	73	4470	0.92
5	406	73	12449	0.92
5	406	73	4499	0.91
5	674	73	4446	0.91
5	675	73	4415	0.91
5	676	73	4379	0.91
5	678	73	4436	0.92

Note: Adapted from the *Kansas Assessments in Reading and Mathematics Technical Manual for the Kansas General Assessments*, by Kansas University Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation, 2007.

Lunenburg & Irby (2008) explained validity as the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure. Validity refers to the appropriateness or correctness of inferences, decisions, or descriptions made from test results about what students know and can do. Poggio, Yang, Irwin, Glasnapp, and Poggio (2007) disclosed three criterion related analyses documenting the relationship of Kansas Assessment scores to relevant variables external to the test. The first analysis was a predictive validity study of the Kansas Assessments in Reading and Mathematics. According to the authors, a formative assessment program was introduced in Kansas during the 2005-6 academic year. Correlations between the total scores on this formative assessment and the Kansas Assessment equated total scores were obtained for each grade level. The correlations ranged from .71 to .87 which offered evidence of the predictive validity of the Kansas Assessments.

The second analysis, looking at the relationship of individual student test scores across years, was conducted to provide another source of criterion-related validity evidence for the Kansas State Assessments (KSA). Observed coefficients ranged from 0.70 to 0.80 which were moderately high and in an expected range, providing moderately strong evidence for the predictive validity of the KSA (Poggio, et. al., 2007). The third analysis investigated the relationship between teacher ratings and student test performance. The data used for this analysis were obtained as part of one of the standard setting procedures (Contrasting Groups method) that was implemented in 2006 for the purpose of identifying cut scores for the new tests. The correlations between teacher ratings and student performance ranged from 0.65 to 0.73 in Reading and 0.67 - 0.74 in Mathematics. The observed teacher ratings and student performance on the Reading and

Mathematics tests were sufficiently high to offer a criterion-related source of evidence supporting the validity of the measurement provided by the Kansas State Assessments. The results of all three analyses provided evidence to support the validity of 2006 Kansas Assessment scores (Poggio, et. al., 2007).

Reliability and validity information was not available on the Baldrige climate survey; however, the Baldrige National Quality Program has been accepted and utilized by the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) as a validated framework to assess an organization's performance (*Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence*, 2012). Initiated during the 2010-11 academic year, the "Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) worked closely with the Alliance for Performance Excellence, the association of state quality award programs modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige Award, to offer AQIP institutions a means for better aligning their work for accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission" (Higher Learning Commission, 2011). The Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence has been internationally utilized as a validated framework.

Qualitative Instrumentation. Flick (2006, p. 204) maintained "collecting verbal data is one of the major methodological approaches in qualitative research." According to Flick, narrative interview questions should directly relate to the research topic. Questions may also allow for aspects of the research question not mentioned by the interviewer to allow for openness and scope for the interviewee's responses. The researcher based the interview questions for the study directly on the research questions which covered staff challenges and perceptions of changes as a result of implementing SWPBS in three distinct sections. All structured interviews were conducted on an

individual basis with identical open ended questions for each interviewee. A time limit was not given to allow sufficient time to state experiences, observations, and perceptions of change as a result of SWPBS. The interview script is included in Appendix E.

Measurement. The first interview section included three questions which dealt with perceptions of changes in student behavior as a result of implementing SWPBS. The first question asked interviewees to describe how inappropriate behaviors in each particular school setting changed as a result of SWPBS. The second question inquired about problems each school encountered before SWPBS and how those problems had changed. The third question requested the interviewees to describe how their particular school implemented SWPBS and to relate successes and challenges.

The second interview section included three questions which dealt with perceptions of changes in student academic performance as a result of implementing SWPBS. The first question asked interviewees if they perceived a change in student focus and academic performance as a result of SWPBS. The second question inquired about a change in the interviewee as a result of SWPBS and the final question requested the interviewees to describe how they perceived the staff had changed as a result of SWPBS.

The third interview section included three questions which dealt with perceptions of changes in school climate as a result of implementing SWPBS. The first question asked each interviewee to describe the present learning and social climate in their school. The second question inquired as to how the learning and social climate in the interviewee's school had changed after implementing SWPBS. The third question

requested the interviewees to explain how worthwhile the implementation had been to the students and staff of their school.

Reliability and Validity. For the qualitative portion of the study, the researcher chose to collect verbal data by creating interview questions for the participating three principals and six teachers. The researcher wanted to create appropriate questions to elicit information about individual perceptions of staff on the effects of SWPBS on each learning community. The researcher utilized the Checklist for Selecting an Interview Type and Evaluating its Application suggested by Flick (2006, p. 209) to guide the "trustworthiness" or reliability of the interview questions to elicit valid responses. The interview questions were created with the collaboration of an interdisciplinary team of educators from the Olathe School District. The team included a special education coordinator, executive director of teaching and learning, and a building leadership team (principal, instructional resource teacher, special education teacher, librarian, music, art, and a representative teacher from kindergarten through fifth grade). The team reviewed and discussed the goals of SWPBS along with the goals of the researcher to create valid questions that would provide honest and helpful feedback to the school district on the effects of SWPBS.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to conducting the study, the researcher acquired consent by completing an internal research application request for permission to conduct research in the Olathe School District. A letter of support was completed by Dr. Harold Frye, Ed.D., Chair of Graduate Education Programs at Baker University, and is included in Appendix A. The research request to the Olathe School District (Appendix B) was reviewed and permission

was granted to conduct the research identifying only the Olathe School District. Permission to conduct the research was granted by the Baker University Institutional Review Board and included in Appendix C. All data collected was extracted from the Olathe School District. Participating schools were identified as school A, school B, and school C to secure anonymity of the subjects and any other information about the subjects that may be considered personal and confidential. Each student included as a subject of the study was assigned an identification number. School principals were identified as Principal A, Principal B, Principal C, and teachers were identified as T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T6.

The first quantitative segment of the study included archival data consisting of office referrals and in-and-out-of-school suspensions. Archival data was requested for each cohort of students from the principals of schools A, B, and C covering zero to three years of implemented SWPBS.

The second quantitative segment of the study was designed to determine to what extent changes occurred in academic scores among students exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS. State reading and math assessments scores for each cohort of students from one through three years of SWPBS (3^{rd}, 4^{th}, and 5^{th} grade) were received from the Olathe District's Director of School Improvement and Assessment. Three years of Kansas State reading and math state assessment scores were examined from three selected elementary schools in the Olathe School District. A cohort group was comprised of ninety-three total students who had attended the selected schools and completed state assessments during a consecutive three year span beginning the year prior to SWPBS implementation. State assessments were administered to students in grades 3, 4, and 5. The elementary cohort

of students exit elementary schools grade at fifth grade and enter into several feeder middle schools. Therefore only three years of assessment data was utilized for this research.

Olathe district climate data results were received from the Olathe District Assistant Director of Technology for zero through three years of SWPBS implementation. The principals of schools A, B, and C each received a letter explaining the research study and requesting their participation. The researcher made appointments to confer with each principal to answer questions about the research and receive verification of accepted participation. Interviews were initiated with the assistance of each building principal as they initially discussed the research project with their building leadership teams during a building leadership meeting prior to interviews. Teachers from each building volunteered and agreed to be interviewed. Two teachers from each elementary school were interviewed in addition to the school principal. The researcher contacted each interviewee to set up a face to face narrative interview utilizing the exact same questions in the same order for each interview.

Each interviewee signed a consent form confirming his/her participation in the interview was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed. All structured interviews were conducted on an individual basis with identical open ended questions for each interviewee at their school site after school hours during the 2011-12 school year. Individual interview dates and times were chosen and agreed upon by each interviewee and the researcher. Questions were given in the exact same order without a time limit. Interviews ranged from forty minutes to ninety minutes depending upon each interviewee's experiences and amount of information shared. Each interviewee was

required to have worked in the school setting during the 0 through 4 years of SWPBS implementation and was given the exact same questions in the same order. A time limit was not given to allow sufficient time to state experiences, observations, and perceptions of change as a result of SWPBS.

Data Coding and Entry

Archival data consisting of office referrals and in-and-out-of-school suspensions, were collected for each cohort of students from the principals of schools A, B, and C covering zero to three years of implemented SWPBS. Archival office referral and suspension data were entered by the researcher into one Excel workbook organized by years implementing SWPBS, student enrollment, and the amount of referrals in addition to in-and-out-of-school suspensions.

Archival state reading and math assessments scores for each designated schools' cohort of students covering the first three years of SWPBS (3^{rd}, 4^{th}, and 5^{th} grade) were received from the Olathe District's Director of School Improvement and Assessment. The data in the Excel worksheet included cohort student scores on Kansas State Reading and Math Assessments during the first three years of SWPBS implementation.

Olathe district climate scores were received from the Olathe District Assistant Director of Technology for each school covering the school years 2007-8, 2008-9, 2009-10, and 2010-11. Inclusive staff, including certified teachers and classified staff of each school, were given the opportunity to complete the Olathe District survey anonymously. The Olathe District climate survey data was entered into an Excel worksheet and included responses to the following question and statements.

Question 1: Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?

Statement 1: I am proud to tell others I work for the Olathe School District.

Statement 2: I have a safe workplace.

Statement 3: I am treated respectfully and have input into decisions that directly affect my work,

Statement 4: My school district has high standards and ethics.

Statement 5: Diversity is valued at my school

For the qualitative portion of the study, individual principal and teacher interviews were transcribed by the researcher using the same questions in the same order. The researcher analyzed, organized, and coded all interview responses by each question relating to topics dealing with student academic performance, behavior, and school climate.

Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Data from the Excel workbook was imported into IBM SPSS Statistics 18.0 Faculty Pack for Windows. Hypothesis tests were conducted to address each of the research questions. Qualitative comparison data was obtained by teacher and administrator interviews. The results of the tests helped to determine to what extent changes had occurred in academic scores, student behaviors, and district employee perceptions of climate.

Research question 1: To what extent have changes occurred in documented student behaviors (office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions) among students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS?

Hypothesis 1: Statistically significant changes occurred in documented student behaviors (office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions) among

students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 1. The dependent variable was the archival data consisting of office referrals and in-and out-of-school suspensions. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Research question 2: To what extent have changes occurred in academic scores among students who had been exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS.

Hypothesis 2: Statistically significant changes occurred in Kansas state reading scores among students who had been exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A one factor ANOVA was utilized to test hypothesis 2. The numerical dependent variable was the Kansas State Assessment reading score results. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Hypothesis 3: Statistically significant changes occurred in Kansas state math scores among students who had been exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A one factor ANOVA was utilized to test hypothesis 3. The numerical dependent variable was the Kansas State Assessment math score results. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Research question 3: To what extent have changes occurred in district employee school climate data results among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS? Specific stems investigated by the researcher from the Olathe District Climate Survey are listed below with each stem (question or statement) followed by a hypothesis.

Survey Question 1: Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?

Hypothesis 4: Statistically significant changes occurred in job satisfaction scores among staff who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi

square test of independence was utilized to address hypothesis 4. The dependent variable was the Olathe District Climate responses. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Statement 1: I am proud to tell others I work for the Olathe School District.

Hypothesis 5: Statistically significant changes occurred in responses of pride in district scores among staff who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS (α = .05). A chi square test of independence was utilized to address hypothesis 5. The dependent variable was the responses of pride in district score results. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Statement 2: I have a safe workplace.

Hypothesis 6: Statistically significant changes occurred in scores of job perceptions of a safe workplace among staff who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS (α = .05). A chi square test of independence was utilized to address hypothesis 6. The dependent variable was the responses of a safe work place in district score results. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Statement 3: I am treated respectfully and have input into decisions that directly affect my work.

Hypothesis 7: Statistically significant changes occurred in scores of respect and decision making affecting work among staff who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS (α = .05). A chi square test of independence was utilized to address hypothesis 7. The dependent variable was the responses of being treated respectfully and

having input into decisions that directly affected the staff worker in district score results. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Statement 4: My school district has high standards and ethics.

Hypothesis 8: Statistically significant changes occurred in scores of district high standards and ethics among staff who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi square test of independence was utilized to address hypothesis 8. The dependent variable was the responses of the school district having high standards and ethics. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Statement 5: Diversity is valued at my school

Hypothesis 9: Statistically significant changes occurred in the value of diversity scores among staff who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi square test of independence was utilized to address hypothesis 9. The dependent variable was the responses of diversity being valued in district score results. The categorical independent variable was the years of implemented SWPBS.

Research question 4: What are the perceptions of student behaviors among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?

Research question 5: What are the perceptions of student academic scores among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?

Research question 6: What are the perceptions of changes in school climate among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS?

To address questions 4, 5, and 6, teacher and administrators were interviewed using a qualitative approach and asked a sum of nine identical questions that pertained to perceptions of student behaviors (office referrals and suspensions), student academic

scores, and changes in school climate. The researcher typed and processed the interview notes of each individual interviewee. Principal and teacher responses were separated. Data reduction followed as the researcher analyzed and interpreted the responses to each question to note common features, regularities, explanations, and patterns of responses.

Limitations

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) described limitations as factors that may have an effect on the findings of a study and are not under the control of the researcher. Consistency of office referral documentation within each school and among the three schools in this research study was factors out of the control of the researcher. Student assessment scores may not have revealed a true measure of individual student academic ability due to testing environment, technology error, student education, student health, or test preparation. Climate scores may have been skewed with inaccurate responses due to employee fear of administrative retaliation. The three year span of SWPBS implementation in the three targeted elementary schools may have not been a sufficient amount of time to measure significant change in behavior, academic scores, or school climate. Accuracy of information gathered from principal and teacher interviews may have been inaccurate or biased due to individual perceptions of the interviewees. An additional limitation may have been the variance among teachers in teaching the core curriculum and consistent implementation of SWPBS.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if SWPBS was a viable alternative for Olathe district schools to improve behavior and academic outcomes for all students. The study also examined the relationship between SWPBS, academic outcomes, and school

climate surveys to determine if there was a positive increase in school climate scores in addition to academic scores with the utilization of SWPBS. This chapter reviewed the methodology that was used to conduct this study and includes the following subsections: research design, population and sample, sampling procedures, instrumentation, validity, data collection procedures, data coding, data analysis and hypothesis test, and limitations. Chapter four will summarize the results obtained from this study with results presented in narrative and tabular form.

Chapter Four

Results

A mixed quantitative and qualitative design was used to collect and analyze data for this research study. For the quantitative portion of the study, the researcher compared behavioral archival data (office referrals, in-school suspensions, out of school suspensions), Kansas State Assessment scores, and district staff climate scores of three designated Olathe elementary schools over four consecutive years of implementing SWPBS (n = 882). For the qualitative portion of the study, the researcher investigated teacher and administrator perceptions of student behavior, school climate, and academic scores to determine if perceptions had changed as a result of the implementation of SWPBS. In this chapter the researcher describes the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses.

Quantitative Descriptive Statistics

The study's quantitative analyses involved three separate samples. The first quantitative sample included the total number of students in each school during four consecutive years including 1 year prior to being exposed to three consecutive years of implemented SWPBS. The total school enrollment of students changed slightly over the four years. The first year total included 1,395 students. The second year included 1, 362 students. The third year included 1,292 students, and the fourth year included 1,190 students. These samples were used for analyzing student behavior incidents (office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out of school suspensions).

The second quantitative sample included 93 students purposively selected from three schools (A, B, and C) in the Olathe School District for academic measurement by

student reading and math scores on the Kansas State Assessment. These students attended the elementary schools for four consecutive years including 1 year prior to being exposed to three consecutive years of implemented SWPBS.

The third quantitative sample included staff members who completed the Olathe climate survey from three schools (A, B, and C) in the Olathe School District during four consecutive years including 1 year prior to being exposed to three consecutive years of implemented SWPBS. The total number off staff completing the surveys changed over the years due to school population. The number of questions answered on the survey each year also changed, as some questions were left unanswered. Hypothesis testing included three research questions using 11 hypotheses to test the three questions.

Hypothesis Testing

Research question 1. To what extent have changes occurred in documented student behaviors (office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions) among students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS? Three hypotheses were conducted to address research question 1.

Research Hypothesis 1. Statistically significant changes occurred in documented student office referrals among students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 1.

Table 4 provides the results of the hypothesis test for student office referrals. A statistically significant relationship was observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented student office referrals ($X^2 = 72.624$, $df = 3$, $p = .000$). The number of referrals in 2007-08 ($n = 493$) was higher than expected by chance ($n = 381.83$). The number of referrals in 2008-09 ($n = 350$) was less than expected by chance

(n = 372.80). The number of referrals in 2009-10 (n = 272) was less than expected by chance (n = 353.64). The number of referrals in 2010-11 (n = 319) was less than expected by chance (n = 325.72). Office referrals were higher than expected by chance the year prior to implementing SWPBS (2007-2008). During the first and second years of SWPBS (2008-2010), referrals decreased. Referrals increased during the third year of SWPBS (2010-2011); however, referrals were still less than expected by chance.

Table 4

Office Referrals

Office Referrals		Years				Total
		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	
Yes	Observed	493	350	272	319	1434
	Expected	381.83	372.80	353.64	325.72	1434
No	Observed	902	1012	1020	871	3805
	Expected	1013.17	989.20	938.36	864.28	3805
Total		1395	1362	1292	1190	5239

Research Hypothesis 2. Statistically significant changes occurred in documented student in-school suspensions (ISS) among students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS (α = .05). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 2.

Table 5 provides the results of the hypothesis test for student in-school suspensions (ISS). A statistically significant relationship was observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented ISS (X^2 = 9.73, df = 3, p = 0.021). The number of ISS in 2007-09 (n = 89) was higher than expected by chance (n = 75.09). The number of ISS in 2008-09 (n = 74) was within the same range as (n = 73.31) expected by

chance. The number of ISS in 2009-10 (n = 49) was less than (n = 69.54) expected by chance. The number of ISS in 2010-11 (n = 70) was more than expected by chance (70). Data indicated over four years, ISS were higher than expected by chance the year prior to implementing SWPBS (2007-2008). During the first year (2008-2009), ISS decreased from the previous year and were within the same range as expected. ISS decreased significantly during the second year and rose again the third year (2010-2011).

Table 5

In-School Suspensions

		Years				
ISS		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Total
Yes	Observed	89	74	49	70	282
	Expected	75.09	73.31	69.54	64.05	1434
No	Observed	1306	1288	1243	1120	4957
	Expected	1319.91	1288.69	1222.46	1125.95	4957
Total		1395	1362	1292	1190	5239

Note: ISS = In-school suspensions

Research Hypothesis 3. Statistically significant changes occurred in documented out-of-school suspensions (OSS) among students who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS (α = .05). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 3.

Table 6 provides the results of the hypothesis test for student out-of-school suspensions (OSS). A statistically significant relationship was not observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented out-of-school suspensions (X^2 = 3.841,

df = 3, *p* = 0.279). The number of OSS in 2007-08 (*n* = 51) was not different from the frequency expected by chance (*n* = 52.99). During the 2008-09 school year, the number of OSS (*n* = 44) was not different from the frequency expected by chance (*n* = 51.73). The OSS (*n* = 60) during the 2009-10 school year was not higher than expected by chance (*n* = 49.08). During the 2010-11 school year, the number of OSS (*n* = 44) was not different than the frequency expected by chance (*n* = 45.20). These overall results indicate there was not a significant change that occurred in documented OSS among students who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS.

Table 6

Out-of-School Suspensions

		Years				
OSS		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Total
Yes	Observed	51	44	60	44	199
	Expected	52.99	51.73	49.08	45.20	199
No	Observed	1344	1318	1232	1146	5040
	Expected	1342.01	1310.27	1242.92	1144.80	5040
Total		1395	1362	1292	1190	5239

Note: OSS = Out-of-school suspensions

Research question 1 summary. The results of the analyses indicate a statistically significant relationship was observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented student office referrals. Office referrals were higher than expected by chance the year prior to implementing SWPBS (2007-2008). During the first and second years of SWPBS (2008-2010), referrals decreased. Referrals increased during the third year of SWPBS (2010-2011); however, referrals were still less than expected by chance.

A statistically significant relationship was observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented ISS. Data indicated over four years, ISS were higher than expected by chance the year prior to implementing SWPBS (2007-2008). During the first year (2008-2009), ISS decreased from the previous year and were within the same range as expected. ISS decreased significantly during the second year and rose again the third year (2010-2011).

A statistically significant relationship was not observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented out-of-school suspensions. The number of OSS in 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-2010, and 2010-2012 were not higher than expected by chance. Overall results indicate there was not a significant change that occurred in documented OSS among students who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS.

Research question 2. To what extent have changes occurred in academic scores among students who had been exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS? Two hypotheses were conducted to address research question 2.

Research Hypothesis 4. Statistically significant changes occurred in Kansas state reading scores among students who had been exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$).

A one factor ANOVA was utilized to test hypothesis 4. The categorical variable used to group the students' reading scores was the year (2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11). The results of the analysis for Kansas reading scores indicated a statistically significant difference between at least two of the three means ($F = 8.588$, $df = 2, 184$, $p = .000$). See Table 7 for the means and standard deviations for this analysis. A follow up post hoc was conducted to determine which pairs of means were different. The Tukey's Honestly

Significant Difference (HSD) critical value was 2.81. The difference between the means had to be greater than this value to be considered statistically different ($\alpha = .05$). The average reading score for 2008-09 (M =78.76) was lower than the average score for 2009-10 (M = 83.71). The average reading score for 2010-11 (82.76) was not statistically different from 2009-10 (M = 83.71) but was higher than the average reading score for 2008-09 (M = 78.76). Overall results indicate Kansas state reading scores improved among students who had been exposed to 2 or 3 years of SWPBS.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Kansas State Reading Assessments

Years	Means	Standard Deviations	N
2008-09	78.76	15.83	93
2009-10	83.71	10.47	93
2010-11	82.77	11.59	93

Research Hypothesis 5. Statistically significant changes occurred in Kansas state math scores among students who had been exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS (α = .05). A one factor ANOVA was utilized to test hypothesis 5. The numerical dependent variable was the Kansas State Assessment math score results. The categorical variable used to group the students' math scores was the year (2008-9, 2009-10, 2010-11). The results of the analysis indicated there was a statistically significant difference in Kansas state math scores between 2 of the 3 years for students who were exposed to three years of SWPBS (F = 17.899, df = 2, 184, p = .000). See Table 8 for the means and standard deviations for this analysis. A follow up post hoc was conducted to determine which pairs of means were different. The Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD)

critical value was 2.57. The differences between the means had to be greater than this value to be considered significantly different ($\alpha = .05$). The average math score for 2008-09 ($M = 87.08$) was significantly higher than the average score for 2009-10 ($M = 80.75$). The average math score for 2009-10 ($M = 80.75$) was not different from the average math score for 2010-11 ($M = 82.33$). These results indicated the student math scores decreased between the first and second year of SWPBS and did not statistically change between the second and third year. Student math scores increased the third year, however the scores were not significantly different from the previous years.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Kansas State Math Assessments

Years	Means	Standard Deviations	N
2008-09	87.08	12.29	93
2009-10	80.75	14.04	93
2010-11	82.33	12.30	93

***Research question 2 summary*.** The results of the analysis for Kansas reading scores indicated a statistically significant difference between at least two of the three means. Overall results indicate Kansas state reading scores improved among students who had been exposed to 2 or 3 years of SWPBS.

The results of the analysis for Kansas math scores indicated the student math scores decreased between the first and second year of SWPBS and did not statistically change between the second and third year. Student math scores increased the third year, however the scores were not significantly different from the previous years.

Research question 3. To what extent have changes occurred in district employee school climate scores among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS? The researcher examined six dimensions of the district climate survey: employee job satisfaction scores, statements of pride, perceptions of a safe workplace, respect and decision making, high standards and ethics, and the value of diversity.

Research Hypothesis 6. Statistically significant changes occurred in job satisfaction scores among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 6.

Table 9 provides the results of the hypothesis test for employee job satisfaction on district climate. A statistically significant relationship was not observed between job satisfaction scores and the number of years of SWPBS ($X^2 = 6.862$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.867$). The observed number of Strongly Disagrees (SD), Disagrees (D), Neutrals (N), Agrees (A), and Strongly Agrees (SD), were not different from the frequencies expected by chance among employees who were exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Olathe District Climate Scores on Satisfaction

Satisfaction		Years			
		2007	2008	2009	2010
SD	Observed	5	5	6	4
	Expected	5.53	5.53	5.49	3.45
D	Observed	4	3	6	4
	Expected	4.70	4.70	4.67	2.93
N	Observed	8	9	16	5
	Expected	10.50	10.50	10.44	6.56
A	Observed	83	81	72	47
	Expected	78.20	78.20	77.77	48.82
SA	Observed	81	83	80	53
	Expected	82.07	82.07	81.62	51.24

Research Hypothesis 7. Statistically significant changes occurred in employee pride scores among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS (α = .05). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 7.

Table 10 provides the results of the hypothesis test for employee pride scores on district climate. A statistically significant relationship was not observed between statement of pride scores and the number of years of SWPBS (X^2 = 2.913, *df* = 12, p = 0.996). The observed number of Strongly Disagrees (SD), Disagrees (D), Neutrals (N), Agrees (A), and Strongly Agrees (SD), were not different from the frequencies expected by chance among employees who were exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Olathe District Climate Scores on Statements of Pride

Statements of Pride		Years			
		2007	2008	2009	2010
SD	Observed	1	1	1	1
	Expected	1.07	1.06	1.08	0.79
D	Observed	0	1	1	1
	Expected	0.80	0.79	0.81	0.59
N	Observed	6	6	6	3
	Expected	5.62	5.56	5.66	4.16
A	Observed	56	57	61	49
	Expected	59.71	59.04	60.05	44.20
SA	Observed	114	110	109	77
	Expected	109.79	108.55	110.41	81.26

Research Hypothesis 8. Statistically significant changes occurred in district employee school climate scores of job perceptions of a safe workplace among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 8.

Table 11 provides the results of the hypothesis test for employee job perceptions of a safe workplace on district climate. A statistically significant relationship was not observed between responses of a safe workplace and the number of years of SWPBS ($X^2 = 14.994$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.242$). The observed number of Strongly Disagrees (SD), Disagrees (D), Neutrals (N), Agrees (A), and Strongly Agrees (SD), were not different from the frequencies expected by chance among employees who were exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Olathe District Climate Scores on Safe Workplace

Safe Workplace		Years			
		2007	2008	2009	2010
SD	Observed	3	1	0	2
	Expected	1.63	1.59	1.57	1.21
D	Observed	7	8	2	2
	Expected	5.17	5.05	4.96	3.82
N	Observed	6	12	11	7
	Expected	9.79	9.57	9.40	7.24
A	Observed	77	57	64	47
	Expected	66.61	65.11	63.98	49.30
SA	Observed	84	95	93	73
	Expected	93.80	91.68	90.09	69.42

Research Hypothesis 9. Statistically significant changes occurred in scores of respect and decision making among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 9.

Table 12 provides the results of the hypothesis test for employee responses to respect and decision making on district climate. A statistically significant relationship was not observed between responses of respect and decision making and the number of years of SWPBS ($X^2 = 6.269$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.902$). The observed number of Strongly Disagrees (SD), Disagrees (D), Neutrals (N), Agrees (A), and Strongly Agrees (SD), were not different from the frequencies expected by chance among employees who were exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics for Olathe District Climate Scores on Respect & Decision Making

Respect & Decision Making		Years			
		2007	2008	2009	2010
SD	Observed	1	3	2	2
	Expected	2.14	2.14	2.09	1.62
D	Observed	8	14	9	6
	Expected	9.91	9.91	9.68	7.50
N	Observed	16	13	17	8
	Expected	14.46	14.46	14.13	10.95
A	Observed	76	81	77	63
	Expected	79.54	79.54	77.70	60.23
SA	Observed	72	62	64	52
	Expected	66.95	66.95	65.40	50.70

Research Hypothesis 10. Statistically significant changes occurred in scores of high standards and ethics among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). Due to the inconsistency and change in questions dealing with high standards and ethics among staff among the 0 – 3 years of SWPBS, this hypothesis was not able to be tested.

Research Hypothesis 11. Statistically significant changes occurred in scores of diversity among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). A chi-square test of independence was utilized to test hypothesis 11.

Table 13 provides the results of the hypothesis test for diversity scores on district climate. A marginally significant relationship was observed between diversity scores on district climate and years of SWPBS ($X^2 = 19.890$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.069$). Total responses

were not less than (α = .05) or statistically significantly different from the frequencies expected by chance among employees who were exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS. Though not statistically significant, the number of Disagrees (D) in 2007 (*n* = 8) were greater than expected by chance (*n* = 4.036). The number of Neutrals (N) in 2007 (*n* = 16) were greater than expected by chance (*n* = 10.22) and the number of Agrees (A) in 2007 (*n* = 76) were greater than expected by chance (*n* = 67.53). In addition, the number of Strongly Agrees (SD) in 2009 (*n* = 93) were greater than expected by chance (*n* = 87.79) and the number of Strongly Agrees (SA) in 2010 (*n* = 80) were greater than expected by chance (*n* = 68.05). Over three years of SWPBS, the number of Strongly Agrees for diversity scores on the district climate survey increased while the number of Disagrees and Neutrals decreased.

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Olathe District Climate Scores on Diversity

Satisfaction		Years			
		2007	2008	2009	2010
SD	Observed	1	1	2	1
	Expected	1.35	1.32	1.31	1.02
D	Observed	8	3	2	2
	Expected	4.04	3.97	3.94	3.06
N	Observed	16	10	6	6
	Expected	10.22	10.05	9.99	7.74
A	Observed	76	67	66	42
	Expected	67.53	66.37	65.97	51.14
SA	Observed	72	89	93	80
	Expected	89.86	88.30	87.79	68.05

Climate Summary. Quantitative data analysis of Olathe District climate scores revealed a statistically significant relationship was not observed between the number of years of implemented SWPBS and scores of *job satisfaction, statements of pride, responses of a safe workplace, respect, and decision making.* Statistically significant changes were observed in scores of high standards and ethics among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS ($\alpha = .05$). Due to the inconsistency and change in questions dealing with high standards and ethics among staff among the 0 - 3 years of SWPBS, this hypothesis was not able to be tested. A marginally significant relationship was observed between diversity scores on district climate and years of SWPBS. Though not statistically significant, over three years of SWPBS, the number of Strongly Agrees for diversity scores on the district climate survey increased while the number of Disagrees and Neutrals decreased.

Qualitative Interviews

The qualitative portion of this study involved interviews with six teachers and three principals of three elementary schools for their perceptions of change in student behavior, academic scores, and school climate after implementing SWPBS for three consecutive years. The interview questions were divided into three sections. The first section included three questions which dealt with perceptions of changes in student behavior as a result of implementing SWPBS. The second interview section included three questions which dealt with perceptions of changes in school climate as a result of implementing SWPBS. The third interview section included three questions which dealt with perceptions of changes in student academic performance as a result of implementing SWPBS.

Interview section 1. Interview section 1 addresses research question four. The three interview questions in this section deal with perceptions of changes in student behavior as a result of implementing SWPBS.

Research question 4. What are the perceptions of student behaviors among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?

Interview question 1. How do you perceive inappropriate behaviors in your school have changed as a result of SWPBS?

The principal of school A (principal A) stated students were more respectful, polite, and made better choices for acceptable behavior. This principal noted a significant rise in referral data for the third year of SWPBS implementation in her building which was due to one kindergarten class with exceptional behavior issues. According to principal A, significant changes in behavior were not necessarily shown in her school data because many offenses that come through the office were not class 2 offenses that needed to be entered into the system. Principal A noted school climate is where she saw and felt the most change; however, climate was much harder to measure. Teachers of school A (school A teachers) saw a decrease in the number of inappropriate behaviors throughout the school with clear expectations of behavior posted throughout the school. Students were more respectful to the staff and each other. Teachers noted a change in staff attitude when dealing with inappropriate behaviors. Staff attitudes were more positive as they focused on positive behaviors. Procedures were clear and consistent with staff supporting each other.

The principal of school B (principal B) responded to question 1 with a definite increase in student positive behaviors and decrease in negative/inappropriate behaviors.

Teachers of school B (school B teachers) both stated inappropriate student behaviors in the school decreased as a result of SWPBS. Students responded to the positive system. The system required a lot of preplanning and teaching of acceptable appropriate behaviors. This school chose the 3 R's (Respectful, Responsible, and Read) as the school's behavior motto.

The principal of school C (principal C) corresponded with principal A and B's responses to question 1. Inappropriate behaviors decreased as positive behaviors increased throughout the three years of SWPBS. Principal C stated the students ran the school when she first became principal at the school. Disrespect, fights, office referrals, and suspensions were out of control along with high staff turnover. The change from turmoil to cooperation with the implementation of SWPBS was significant. Teachers from school C (school C teachers) commented on the huge attitude shift with the implementation of SWPBS. Staff responses to behavior changed and the focus was on the positive. Expectations for the students changed. Staff turnover at the end of three years of SWPBS was minimal with new staff members choosing to stay. Teachers noted a significant change in student behavior. There were still minor issues with respect, however, suspensions were down, referrals were down, a system was in place, and children were learning acceptable behavior. Staff support for each other was also significant. Staff was working together instead of trying to deal with separate problems in separate grade levels or common areas of the school. Teachers felt this made a huge impact on the success of SWPBS.

Interview question 1 summary. Principals from each of the three elementary schools, perceived students were more respectful, polite, and made better choices for

acceptable behavior as a result of SWPBS. Inappropriate behaviors decreased as positive behaviors increased throughout the three years of SWPBS. Teachers perceived a decrease in the number of inappropriate behaviors throughout the school. Students were more respectful to the staff and each other. Procedures in the school were clear and consistent for students. Principals and teachers reported there were still minor issues with respect, however, suspensions and referrals were down, a system was in place, and children were learning acceptable behavior.

Interview question 2. What types of problems did your school deal with before SWPBS? How has that changed?

Principal A explained the old system utilized at the school prior to SWPBS was a card system, negative in nature, which did not teach appropriate behaviors. Destruction of school property, bullying, inappropriate language, and fights were common issues dealt with before SWPBS. In addition, teachers from school A noted excessive talking, loud volume, refusal to follow directions, back talking, messes in the bathrooms, bullying, fighting, inappropriate behavior in the halls, assemblies, lunchroom, and playground, and a general lack of respect for students and adults which resulted in many office referrals and withdrawal of privileges. These problems changed with the implementation of SWPBS and staff working together to set up school wide expectations. Staff spent focused planned time at the beginning of the each school year teaching the school-wide behavior expectations to the students. Appropriate behaviors were specifically taught and reinforced within a school wide system of support. Students responded to the positive directives and reinforcements from staff with making better choices for appropriate behavior and respect for each other.

Principal B shared the most significant problem before SWPBS was blatant disrespect for adults and each other. School B teachers expressed disrespect, lack of control, inappropriate behavior in the halls, bathrooms, assemblies and lunchroom were major problems. These behaviors improved with the involvement of all staff noticing and reinforcing appropriate behavior with the implementation of SWPBS.

Principal C revealed disrespect towards people, property, and learning was the major problem before the implementation of SWPBS. School C teachers shared student behavior was defiant and blatantly disrespectful. Students refused to work and follow directions. There were many fights (verbal and physical). Climate was stifled and negative. School C principal and teachers all mentioned utilizing SWPBS allowed the staff to support each other and teach necessary social skills to students. The school focus was on respect for people, property, and learning.

Interview question 2 summary. Principals and teachers dealt with numerous behavior problems. Destruction of school property, bullying, inappropriate language, fights, excessive talking, refusal to work or follow directions, back talking, defiance, messes in the bathrooms, and inappropriate behavior on the bus, in the halls, assemblies, lunchroom, and playground resulted in many office referrals and withdrawals of privileges. As a result of SWBPS, appropriate behaviors were specifically taught and reinforced within a school wide system of support. Students responded to the positive directives and reinforcements from staff with making better choices for appropriate behavior and respect for each other. Inappropriate behaviors were not totally eliminated; however, they significantly decreased while more appropriate behaviors increased and were observed by staff.

Interview question 3. Describe how you have implemented SWPBS in your school with the successes and challenges you experienced.

Principal A revealed there was some initial teacher resistance to SWPBS. Some teachers wanted immediate consequences for behavior and preferred the previous card system which gave negative consequences. Following much discussion and inservice on the subject of SWPBS, the staff came to consensus and adopted SWPBS. Principal A noted a few staff members needed motivators to implement the system; however, with principal intervention and data shared with staff, the system was implemented. SWPBS were introduced at an all school assembly at the beginning of the school year. Behavior expectations were modeled by staff members at the assembly. Expectations were revisited throughout the school year as needed. Positive reinforcers came verbally and in the form of slips of paper called TAGS. The logo, TAGS, was printed on paper and handed out to students as staff noticed respectful behaviors. The logo stood for T-Tell the truth, A-Act Responsibly, G-Give it your personal best, and S-Show respect. Students could accumulate TAGS and trade them in for prizes, special privileges, or extra time with an adult. The whole purpose of the TAGS was to catch and reinforce students making good choices. A three carbon paper system was used for each TAG. One copy went to the office, one was for the teacher, and one was for the student to take home the day they received his/her TAG. Principal noticed as her staff increased the amount of positive reinforcers (verbal and paper), behavior referrals and behavior issues decreased.

A major challenge shared by Principal A was getting all staff to initially buy into the positive mindset. Getting everyone on board with the new SWPBS system took many conversations and research data to prove results were worth the system change. The

management of counting and keeping track of innumerable TAGS was time consuming and overwhelming which took time and creative thinking to establish a workable system. The principal expressed a need for motivators for teachers and staff to continue to implement SWPBS. The principal established a TAGS hotline which communicated to teachers certain days when teachers could wear jeans and give out double TAGS. Principal A also had a Student Wheel which allowed for instant winners who could spin the wheel for various prizes/privileges. A Teacher Wheel was later established, which allowed teachers who gave out the most TAGS to earn extra plan time, free lunch, relief from recess duty, etc. Principal A also stated there would always be a need for review and retraining for SWPBS with returning and new staff.

The two teachers from school A (teachers A1 and A2) agreed that it took extra time and effort from staff to set up the system for success. It took substantial focused time for discussions and staff consensus to set up school wide expectations. Staff worked together to make up skits and videos to demonstrate appropriate behaviors to students. A large amount of time was spent at the beginning of the year teaching the expectations to students. The two teachers also commented on the challenge of dealing with all the paper work and student rewards from the menu of choices students utilized to redeem their TAGS. Over the three years, the reward system was streamlined and became easier to use. Some students were highly motivated by the tangible rewards and others were motivated by time with staff members or special privileges. The teachers and the principal of school A agreed that the system was definitely worth the time and effort. The resulting climate was positive. More emphasis was spent on teaching children what

is appropriate. More emotional support was available for each other (students and staff in the building).

Principal B expressed a school wide behavior system was the number one need communicated when surveying her staff. To tackle this need, principal B took a team to a summer conference to learn about SWPBS. The team began by writing school wide expectations. The expectations were agreed upon by staff and continued to be tweaked by staff as needed. The slogan for school B was Positive Actions Worth Seeing (PAWS). The three R's for this school were Ready, Respect, and Responsibility. principal B and both school B teachers stated they spent a considerable amount of time at the beginning of the year teaching the expectations to the students. Teacher B2 voiced SWPBS is not a quick fix to solving student behavior problems. The staff made a video and used the first week of school to demonstrate and teach students expected school behaviors.

Principal B and both school B teachers stated a major challenge was for everyone on their staff to have a positive mindset. Other challenges were counting and keeping track of PAWS, which were similar to school A's TAGS. The logo, PAWS, was printed on paper and handed out to students as staff noticed respectful behaviors. Students could accumulate PAWS and trade them in for prizes, special privileges, or extra time with an adult. This school had 17,000 PAWS for the first semester. At the beginning the teachers were overwhelmed with the paperwork and scheduling of rewards. This building also utilized the 3 carbon paper system for PAWS similar to School A's system. One PAW was for the office, one for the teacher, and one for the students to take home the day he/she received the PAW. School B teachers communicated school B was

fortunate to have the school nurse's husband volunteer to keep track of all the data in a special data base he updated weekly which was an immense help to the staff. School B teachers also communicated another challenge they faced was making sure students that were always "good" and exhibiting appropriate behaviors be recognized since so much effort was focused on finding and reinforcing the positive behaviors of students who had previously exhibited inappropriate problem behaviors. It was noted that often the naughty students in need of support received lots of PAWS and responsible, quiet students could easily go unnoticed. The information provided by the school nurse's husband helped with this challenge as he developed spread sheets that included every child in every class. Teachers could view the spreadsheets and see who they had given PAWS to checking to make sure non-problem students were also recognized.

Principal C communicated student behavior was out of control before initiating SWPBS. The principal was a new principal to the school and the staff was ready to try anything to improve student behavior. The staff began with inservice on SWPBS and decided at the inservice, the main problem in their school was disrespect. During the inservice staff members came up with the school slogan, CARE (care about the school, students, staff, and learning). Next, the staff came up with their school reward which was a Champion Chip. The Champion Chip was similar to the TAGS of school A and the PAWS of school B. It was a verbal and tangible reward that reinforced appropriate student behaviors observed by staff. Staff focused on catching students making good choices and handed out Champion Chips for students to collect and trade in for prizes or special privileges. The Champion Chips were given in triplicate form. One copy went home, one copy went in the school basket, and the third copy went to the teacher of the

student receiving the Champion Chip. Each class had a menu to choose from in addition to principal C's special wagon of surprises.

Principal C noted a main challenge was trying to implement SWPBS with the fifth and sixth grade students. Students moved on to middle school as seventh graders. It was difficult to reverse fifth and sixth grade student thinking (especially the negative challenging students) and retrain behavior patterns with just one to two years of the new system. These students had five to six years of established school behaviors that were inappropriate. Principal C shared another challenge was with a few classified staff who worked in the cafeteria. These particular staff members complained about student behavior, however, were not handing out Champion Chips for appropriate behavior and were also not displaying positive behaviors to students themselves. These staff members thought students should be respectful without the chips and did not want to hand them out. The principal intervened by requesting the cafeteria staff to document the number of chips they were handing out. They were given a quota to hand out on a daily basis. Once the cafeteria staff saw the positive change the chips made, they understood the positive effect on student behavior. The principal has since stopped having them document how many chips they hand out as it has become second nature to the staff. The principal also commented that after a while, the chips are not as necessary for motivators since students start ingraining positive behaviors into their daily behavior patterns. Students still continue to work for chips; however, the positive interactions between staff and their peers becomes an integral part of their personalities and climate of the school. Behavior in the halls, bathrooms, assemblies, and lunchroom significantly improved with the staff utilizing SWPBS.

School C teachers shared the definite need for staff inservice, discussions, and planning prior to implementing SWPBS. School C did not have specials (music, art, P.E., library, computers, or Spanish) the first day of school. Instead, the teachers taught expected behaviors to the students. Every teacher taught a location or focus area behavior procedure such as arrival, dismissal, bathroom, lunchroom recess, assembly, bus, etc. There was a fifteen minute time limit at each station. Teachers demonstrated and acted out specific behaviors/situations to set the expected standards for students. Student assemblies also reinforced the expectations along with teacher and student discussions in individual classrooms throughout the school year.

Other challenges noted by school C teachers were the amount of paper work, data collection, and handing out prizes. It took time, practice, and creativity to come up with a good management system. Acknowledging the students who were consistently making good choices along with the targeted students in need of support was another challenge. The teachers in this school kept track of the Champion Chips they handed out. There was not a special data person for school C. Each teacher was in charge of his/her own class and developed his/her own data system to make sure all their students were recognized. Specialists communicated with individual classroom teachers about specific concerns or problems with individual students. The focus was always on teaching appropriate behaviors and catching students exhibiting the expected behaviors.

Interview question 3 summary. Principal and teacher responses describing how SWPBS was implemented in their schools indicated many similarities. All three elementary school principals were searching for a school-wide behavior system that would teach and reinforce positive learning and social student behaviors. Each principal

reached out to their staff to discuss behavior issues, study current research, and offer the opportunity to attend inservices to learn about SWPBS. Each staff came to consensus and adopted SWPBS after much discussion, research, and inservice. Each staff revealed extended time was needed to set up school wide expectations and come to staff consensus. Staffs worked together to make up skits and/videos to demonstrate appropriate behaviors to students. A significant amount of time was spent at the beginning of the year by each staff to teach behavior expectations to students. Expectations were revisited at each school throughout the school year as needed. Each staff utilized positive notes to catch and reinforce students making good choices which were originally referred to as Gotcha's in the SWPBS training. Each school staff came up with their own name for Gotcha's (TAGS, PAWS, and CHIPS). The tangible positive TAGS, PAWS, and CHIPS were collected by students to trade in for prizes or special privileges. The focus on positive behaviors was helpful to motivate, shape, and reinforce students who had difficulties with school rules. Reinforcers were positive instead of negative. In addition to many similarities, each staff differed in how they implemented SWPBS in their school community. Each staff came to consensus for specific behavior targets for their school. Organization and implementation of the SWPBS system was unique to each school with goals, logos, teaching of behaviors, reinforcements, etc., developed by the staff to meet the needs of their students.

Two major challenges shared by all principal and teacher interviewees were convincing all staff to buy into the positive mindset and the extra time and effort to set the system up for success. Time and effort was needed for discussions and staff consensus to set up school wide expectations. Time and effort was needed for staff to

work together to make up skits/videos to demonstrate appropriate behaviors to students. Time and effort was needed at the beginning of the year to teach school expectations to students, making sure all students were recognized. Another challenge was the management of counting and keeping track of innumerable Gotcha's (TAGS, PAWs, or Chips) and dealing with all the paper work and menu of choices for students to redeem their Gotcha's. Motivators were also needed for teachers and staff to continue to implement the system. Some teacher and classified staff resistance to SWPBS was noted at first which required principal intervention to implement the system. All three principals revealed a need for their leadership to provide staff motivators for the continued implementation of SWPBS.

Sharing successes, the principals and teachers of all three schools agreed that the system was definitely worth the time and effort; however stressed the need for extra time and commitment from staff to implement and continue implementing the system. Over the three years of implementation, the reward system was streamlined and became easier to use. Some students were highly motivated by the tangible rewards and others were motivated by time with staff members or special privileges. Behaviors in the halls, bathrooms, assemblies, lunchroom, classroom, at recess, and on the bus significantly improved with the staff utilizing SWPBS. More emphasis was spent on teaching students what is appropriate. More emotional support was available for students and staff. The resulting climate was more positive and safe.

Interview section 2. Interview section two addresses research question five. The three interview questions in this section deal with perceptions of changes in student academic scores as a result of implementing SWPBS.

Research question 5. What are the perceptions of student academic scores among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?

Interview question 4. How has student focus and academic performance in the classroom changed with the implementation of SWPBS?

Principal A stated SWPBS offers a powerful tool for teachers which provides a positive reinforcer versus a negative reinforcer. Principal A noted academic gains were evident in her building, however, not just from SWPBS. Utilizing Multiple Tiers of Instruction (MTSS) was also a contributing factor along with effective teaching methods. According to principal A, there were two main outcomes of SWPBS. Utilizing SWPBS improved classroom management which allowed for more teaching time and SWPBS helped to establish relationships throughout the school community. It gave teachers and staff repertoire with students, which supports the learning process as students learn to trust, cooperate, try, and ask for help. Principal A emphasized the relationship piece was huge and could make the difference between a student failing and meeting or exceeding grade level expectations.

School A teachers stated students scores were good and improving. The two teachers agreed there was a need to look at where individual students started out and view individual progress made instead of always looking at year-to-year scores across grade levels. A student could make significant progress and not meet grade level expectations depending upon language, environment, attitude, emotional stability, and natural ability. School A teachers also commented that academics improved when students felt safe and had good instruction by teachers who were not plagued and overcome by behavior problems. Both teachers noted that school A implemented MTSS which was another

factor and intervention that helped improve student scores. These teachers observed SWPBS and MTSS both reinforced student academic learning.

Principal B shared many school B students come to school below grade level and were transient as school B was a title 1, English Language Learner (ELL) school. Even so, principal B stated, "Happy kids and teachers breed success." Students in school B were learning. SWPBS and MTSS together were making a difference for student academic learning. Teacher and staff continued to learn long with the children. Academic scores indicated student progress. Principal B revealed there were students who made a lot of academic progress, yet still fell in the unsatisfactory section of district and state testing. The goal of school B staff was to work hard to help all students improve and move forward in social and academic skills. Principal B saw a huge need for social teaching so students could learn how to build social thinking skills that affect learning.

School B teachers noted scores improved with a challenging population due to teachers working together to provide the best possible learning environment. SWPBS helped with the management part of student behaviors. Appropriate behaviors allowed for a climate that was conducive to learning. Teachers could do a better job of teaching and student focus on learning was enhanced when the climate was safe and behaviors were appropriate. Therefore, academic learning improved.

The school C principal stated making annual yearly progress (AYP) was a huge accomplishment for school C which was also a Title 1, ELL school site. The school focused on improving academics as many of the ELL students struggled to meet district and state requirements. Few parents were involved in the school before implementing

SWPBS. Post SWPBS more parent traffic and involvement in the school was evident from English-as-second-language parents. Children were taking home positive rewards and parents were hearing that their children were successful and learning.

School C teachers expressed establishing relationships was crucial to connect with students and motivate them to work hard. SWPBS had made a significant impact focusing on the positive and helping to build relationships across the entire school family. Many of the students required extra instruction to meet academic goals. Student scores were improving even though they did not always meet district mandates. When students came to school two years behind academically, they often were not able to catch up in one year; however, they could improve and school scores proved that. School C staff focused on celebrating growth and moving forward. According to school C teachers, SWPBS has encouraged the students to make relationships with staff which has allowed them to take risks instead of shutting down when something is hard. Taking risks allows the opportunity for growth. These teachers noted SWPBS had made a significant impact with focusing on the positive and building relationships across the entire school. There were many teachers and staff who worked with small groups of students who needed extra instruction to meet academic goals. MTSS was utilized by teachers in addition to SWPBS which made the learning process even stronger. Student scores were improving in spite of the transient population, Title I, and ELL status.

Interview question 4 summary. All three principals noted academic gains were evident in each of their buildings and contributed it to the combined utilization of SWPBS and Multiple Tiers of Instruction (MTSS). Principals shared student academic scores indicated consistent progress; however, there were students who came to school

below grade level who made significant progress, yet still fell in the unsatisfactory section of district and state testing. Principals and teachers of all three schools emphasized the need to examine school scores and celebrate individual student progress in addition to district and state mandated scores. Teachers agreed that the use of SWPBS and MTSS together made a significant impact on improving student academic performance. The use of SWPBS improved classroom management which allowed for more teaching time and helped to establish relationships throughout the school community. Relationships supported the learning process as students learned to trust, cooperate, try, and ask for help.

Interview question 5. How has your teaching changed as a result of implementing SWPBS?

Principal A stated SWPBS was the basic philosophy she used to run her classroom when she was a teacher. She didn't have a name for it then, and didn't have all the critical parts to SWPBS; however, her general focus was on the positive because it worked for her. Principal A wanted her staff to focus on the positive and steered them in the direction of SWPBS as she firmly believed in reinforcing the positive and building relationships to successfully teach students social and academic skills which would allow them to live safely in our world. Principal A expressed that she had changed from working with one class to working with the entire school population (students and staff). She shared the school's successes and challenges with other principals in the district and beyond.

Teachers A1 and A2 both stated they changed and now focus on and reward positive behavior more than they did before utilizing SWPBS. They are more conscious

of their responses and actions with students and staff. Teacher 1A expressed catching herself when she was not being positive and being more conscious about following through with SWPBS and realizing how her responses affected student behavior, staff, and the climate in the building.

Principal B agreed that she has changed and revealed she learned to address the specific areas where most problems appeared more effectively. She utilized the data which helped her address specific issues. She learned that her staff needed to understand the data to change and do what was best for children. Principal B stated she had "more honest communications" with staff due to SWPBS and what it taught her as an administrator was to look at herself and focus on how she related to students and staff.

Teacher B3 expressed she now has many more relationships with students and staff because she now affects everybody's students. It's not just her classroom students that she is responsible for. There is a joint responsibility for the entire school population.

Teacher B4 stated SWPBS impacted her by making her look at herself and focus on how she relates to inappropriate situations. She tried to find the positive in students and gives them the right to make mistakes and learn from them. She commented that instead of "Stop that" coming out of her mouth were positive redirections or questions. Positive words come out of her mouth naturally now instead of reprimands.

School C principal changed by getting better each year at focusing on the positive. She shared her life after SWPBS was easier and happier at school than her first year before SWPBS at the school. The first year she felt eaten alive with behavior issues and had constant streams of students in her office. After SWPBS she was able to leave her

office and get into classrooms and other school areas to make positive connections with students and did not have to deal with behaviors and office referrals all day long.

Teacher C5 shared she felt connected to everyone in the school and felt good about it. All the students were important, not just her students. They were more than just students. They were family. Teacher C6 also stated she changed mostly in making connections outside her classroom students. The students were everybody's students and challenges were everybody's challenges. All the staff was important, not just the teaching staff. She connected and worked to support behaviors in all areas of the school with all staff.

Interview question 5 summary. One principal stated reinforcing the positive worked for her as a teacher and she changed from working with one class to worked with the entire school population (students and staff) as an administrator. The school's successes and challenges were shared with other principals in the district and beyond. Another principal revealed she learned to address specific areas where most problems appeared more effectively through the use of SWPBS data. The data helped her address specific issues with her staff. This principal also learned to look at herself and focus on how she related to students and staff. All principals shared they became better each year at focusing on the positive with students, staff, and parents. All teachers stated they noticed and rewarded positive behavior significantly more post-SWPBS than before. Teachers were more conscious of responses and actions with students and staff realizing how differently a positive response could affect students, staff, and climate in the building. There were more relationships with students and staff and a joint responsibility for the entire school population. The students were everybody's students. Teachers tried

to find the positive in students and gives them the right to make mistakes and learn from them. The emphasis was on positive teaching versus negative consequences.

Interview question 6. Describe how you perceive the staff has changed as a result of SWPBS?

Principal A stated the staff now expected to implement SWPBS and focus on the positive. They expected to continue to improve the process and learn new techniques to add to SWPBS. The learning process was ongoing. Teacher A1 volunteered to speak for the staff saying they all focused on rewarding positive behavior first versus penalizing students. It was a mind shift. Teacher A2 communicated the staff now expected to work together. Due to the principal sharing data, all staff was aware of which students needed the most support with significant behavior issues. The principal enlisted the help of everyone on staff to focus on specific students. Teachers understood they were now responsible for the education of all students. Staff expected to support each other.

Principal B shared SWPBS had a huge effect on parent school connections. There was one hundred percent parent buy in and support for SWPBS. There were still consequences for misbehavior; however, the focus was on teaching appropriate behaviors and how to make better choices if poor choices were made. Expectations for students were made clear. Everyone on staff knew and understood what was acceptable behavior looked and sounded like. Staff worked together to teach students acceptable behavior. Teacher B3 shared the overall outlook of the school was positive. The school family included everyone in the school. Teacher B4 stated the staff just thinks positive first. Students are rewarded for making safe, responsible, and respectful choices. The school family had grown to include all the students and staff.

Principal C shared the students and staff were happier. Students and staff wanted to come to school to learn and work. It was a huge change from the endless behavior referrals to her office three years prior before implementing SWPBS. Teacher C5 commented the staff bought into and accepted SWPBS. She observed the staff became more positive and consistent with expectations each year of SWPBS. Teacher C5 stated teaching was a tough job and so was learning for a lot of school C's student population. SWPBS supported teaching and learning. The mindset change from traditional discipline pulled the positive best from all shareholders. Teacher C6 observed the staff to be more cohesive and supportive of each other. SWPBS gave everyone a dialogue, the same language, and was the force behind spinning a negative into a positive.

Interview question 6 summary. School staffs now expected to implement SWPBS, focus on the positive, improve the process and learn new techniques. Everyone on staff knew and understood what was acceptable behavior looked and sounded like. Staff worked together to teach students acceptable behavior. There were still consequences for misbehavior; however, the focus was on teaching appropriate behaviors and how to make better choices if poor choices were made. Students and staff wanted to come to school to learn and work. Teachers observed the staff focused on rewarding positive behavior first versus penalizing students. It was a mind shift. Staff now expected to work together. Due to the principal sharing SWPBS data, staffs were aware of which students needed the most support with significant behavior issues. Teachers understood they were now responsible for the education of all students. Every member of the staff was important (certified and classified) and interconnected working toward positive social and academic growth. A mindset change from traditional discipline pulled

the positive best from all shareholders. The use of SWPBS gave everyone a dialogue, the same language, and was the force behind spinning a negative into a positive.

Interview section 3. Interview section three addresses research question six. The three interview questions in this section deal with perceptions of changes in school climate scores as a result of implementing SWPBS.

Research question 6. What are the perceptions of changes in school climate among teachers/administrators after three years of SWPBS implementation?

Interview question 7. Describe the present learning and social climate in your school.

Principal A stated there is emotional support for each other (students and teachers). The focus is looking for the positive, teaching appropriate social behavior, and supporting students emotionally and academically. Teachers A1 and A2 both noted teachers worked together to notice students in other classes. The entire school community was supported by everyone working toward the same goal of supporting student learning.

Principal B stated she shares a weekly data report with her staff which ranks students needing the most support. The staff focuses on noticing these students until positive behaviors (social or learning) are exhibited. Goals for PAWS are set for every semester. Students and teachers love meeting, setting, and passing the goals which have steadily increased over the years. There are special Tune Up Tuesdays for areas that need special focus. During Tune Up Tuesdays, teachers wear their school shirts and give out Double PAWS. Staff works together to give added support to the classes and students that need the most help. Goals are to help our students learn academically and socially

acceptable behavior. Teacher B3 noted a positive climate with connectivity. This teacher saw a relationship piece between students and staff. The whole school was a team with emotional support for each other working toward the same goals. Teacher B4 also noted a positive climate with staff focused on noticing students for what they do right. Working together as a team, made it possible for the staff to join forces and find ways to build relationships with all students (especially difficult challenging students).

Principal C stated students were learning and were feeling proud of their gains. Class time was learning time and students were working to their potential. There were relationships and trust among students and staff. Inappropriate behaviors that did come up were dealt with in a positive manner. There were still consequences which were fair and focused on students learning the appropriate behaviors. Teacher C5 shared the school was climate was positive, family focused, and inviting. Parents, many of whom did not speak English, were included as positive notes went home along with phone calls via an interpreter. Teacher C6 commented the students looked forward to coming to school. The school staff also focused on helping parents learn how to help their children. The climate was overall respectful including staff, students, and parents.

Interview question 7 summary. Principals shared that the focus was looking for the positives, teaching appropriate social behavior, and supporting students emotionally and academically. There was emotional support for each staff member. SWPBS data reports revealed that students needing the most support. The staff focused on noticing these students until positive social or learning behaviors were observed. Staffs worked together to give added support to the classes and students that need the most help. There were relationships and trust among students and staff. Teachers worked together with

classified staff to notice students in other classes. Students and staff celebrated their accomplishments. Teachers helped parents learn how to work with their children to reinforce learning. Each interviewee reported a positive respectful team climate with connectivity and goals to help students learn academically and socially acceptable behavior.

Interview question 8. Explain how the climate in your school changed after implementing SWPBS.

Principal A shared that the fourth year outlook was much more positive than the first year of initiating SWPBS. The process of change takes time. It doesn't happen overnight. This principal gave an example of a school bus problem. Student behavior was out of control on the bus. Principal A established a seating chart and asked the bus driver to give out four Hawaiian leis to four students each morning as they left the bus and entered school. When students handed in the leis, they received double TAGS. Bus behavior dramatically improved. There were natural consequences for the students who abused bus rules; however, the focus was on noticing the students who followed the bus rules. Presently the school staff decided to add glow-in-the- dark charms. Principal A noted as a result of SWPBS, the culture of the staff grew to be creative and proactive as they added new reinforcers to help teach appropriate behavior. This principal saw a huge need for teaching appropriate behavior and added onto the main structure of SWPBS with an additional curriculum book study for the staff called Superflex. Superflex is a social thinking curriculum that provides educators, parents, and therapists motivating ways to teach students how to build social thinking skills. This program gives students a common vocabulary and the power to use words to state frustrations (Madrigall & Winner, 2008).

Principal A noted the present learning climate included students being respectful to staff and to each other.

Teacher A1 noted students were motivated to adjust their behavior to get TAGS, therefore, resulting in better learning and social climate. Teacher A2 noticed a significant difference in student behavior with teachers utilizing SWPBS and those who did not, especially at the beginning of the three year cycle. Overall, most students responded positively and reshaped inappropriate behaviors for teachers who treated them positively and noticed appropriate behaviors. Teacher A2 noted the climate was calmer and more positive after implementing SWPBS. The students felt safe to make mistakes and were willing to learn from their mistakes (academic and behavior). This teacher expressed the positive climate began with principal A who was the person in charge. Principal A utilized SWPBS and followed through with interventions and support for the SWPBS team and staff. A positive learning and social climate in the school was a priority.

Principal B noted the first year of SWPBS she had 12 to 15 referrals a day. After three years of SWPBS she has 2 or 3 a week. She also developed a major and minor tracking form and asked her SWPBS team to decide what inappropriate behaviors would be referred to the office. Aggressive behaviors (hitting, kicking, threats/bullying) would be referred to the office. Teachers were empowered to deal with type 1 minor offenses such as refusal to work, disrespectful language, interrupting, tattling, lying, etc. Teachers were expected to make class agreements with their students that reinforced the out of classroom areas and classroom expectations. A big hurtle was changing the mindset of teachers wanting to keep students in their classrooms during specials (music, art, P.E., library, computers, or Spanish). This principal did not want students missing their

specials and also did not want students staying inside or standing against the outside wall at recess. A walking trail was established for those students who lost recess choice privileges. They were allowed to go to recess and utilize the walking trail to get fresh air and exercise. Students earned back recess privileges after exhibiting appropriate behaviors.

Teacher B3 noted using SWPBS gave all the staff permission to respond and reinforce all students along with criteria that had been developed and accepted by the staff. The school climate had moved from a correcting climate with negative responses to a climate that focused on positive behaviors. An example given was calmly giving a PAW to a student behaving appropriately sitting or standing close to a student displaying inappropriate behavior. Teacher B4 shared that the teachers at the school became more supportive of each other and especially supportive of each others' students. Teachers and classified staff notice they all have an impact on the behavior of all students. The entire school community supports each other.

Principal C shared that the most significant climate change was seeing smiles on the faces of students, staff, and parents in the building who came to like being at school. Parents who couldn't even speak English were proud of their children learning and earning Champion Chips. The negative energy of the halls turned into positive social connections that reinforced learning. Teacher C5 noted the staff now built connections with more students. The staff was more cohesive and celebrated positives everyday. Teacher C6 reported a significant change in climate from using the negative card system which was a warning type system to control student behavior. The disrespectful students did not respond to that system and became more disrespectful which caused lots of staff

frustration. Using SWPBS, teachers were able to teach appropriate behaviors and positively reinforce them. Relationships were formed which reinforced learning.

Interview question 8 summary. Principals shared that the fourth year outlook was much more positive than the first year of initiating SWPBS and noted present learning climate included students being respectful to staff and to each other. Office referrals were significantly less in all three schools. A positive learning and social climate was a priority, observed and felt in all three schools. Teachers stated students were motivated to adjust their behaviors, therefore, resulting in a better learning and social climate. Teachers noticed significant differences in student behavior with teachers utilizing SWPBS and those that did not, especially at the beginning of the three year cycle. All teachers noted the climate was more positive and calm after implementing SWPBS. Students felt safe to make mistakes and were willing to learn from their mistakes (academic and behavior). Teachers expressed the positive climate began with the principal who was the person in charge. Relationships were formed which reinforced learning. Overall, the school climates had moved from correcting climates with negative responses to climates that focused on positive behaviors.

Interview question 9. Convey how worthwhile the implementation of SWPBS has been to your school climate.

Principal A stated the implementation of SWPBS was extremely worthwhile as it reinforced positive interactions among staff and students as it supported learning and acceptable social behavior. Teacher A1 noted students were motivated to adjust their behavior to get TAGS which resulted in better learning and social climate. Teacher A2

noted the climate was calmer and more positive after implementing SWPBS. The students felt safe to make mistakes and were willing to learn from their mistakes.

Principal B shared that school climate had moved from a correcting climate with negative responses to a climate that focused on positive behaviors with the use of SWPBS. The present climate was also safe. Principal B expressed students needed to feel safe from bullies and failure to learn. Teacher B3 stated utilizing SWPBS reinforced communication, relationships, and trust which were building blocks to social and academic learning. Teacher B4 shared that the teachers at the school became more supportive of each other and especially supportive of each others' students as a result of implementing SWPBS. The positive climate included shared responsibility.

Principal C shared that the use of SWPBS was instrumental in turning around the heavy negative climate in her school building. Students were angry, unmotivated, and disrespectful while teachers were frustrated, tired, and using negative reinforcers to attempt to control student behaviors. The use of SWPBS transformed the climate into a positive learning atmosphere. Both school C teachers relayed it was definitely worthwhile to implement SWPBS as the school was a safe place conducive to learning. The school was a positive place. Respect was in everyone's vocabulary and it was observable student and staff behavior.

Interview question 9 summary. Principals expressed the implementation of SWPBS was extremely worthwhile as it reinforced positive interactions among staff and students in addition to supporting learning and acceptable social behavior. School climates had moved from correcting climates with negative responses to safe climates which focused on positive behaviors. Teachers noted students felt safe to make mistakes

and were willing to learn from their mistakes which resulted in a positive learning atmosphere. Utilizing SWPBS reinforced communication, relationships, and trust which were building blocks to social and academic learning. Teachers became more supportive of each other and especially supportive of each others' students. The positive climate included shared responsibility in a safe place conducive to learning. Respect was in everyone's vocabulary and it was observable in student and staff behavior.

Additional Quantitative Analyses

Due to the mixed results of the hypothesis tests involving research question two, which asked to what extent changes had occurred in academic reading and math scores among students who had been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS, the researcher used an additional categorical variable to examine changes in academic scores in more detail. School (A, B, C) was included as an independent variable along with year (2008, 2009, 2010). A two-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The two categorical variables used to group the student reading scores were year (2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11) and school (A, B, C). The two-factor ANOVA can be used to test three hypotheses including a main effect for year, a main effect for school and a two-way interaction effect (year x school). The interaction effect for year by school was used to further test for differences in reading scores. The results of the analysis indicated a statistically significant difference between at least two of the nine means ($F = 5.460$, $df = 4, 180$, $p = .000$). See Table 14 for the means and standard deviations for this analysis.

A follow up post hoc was conducted to determine which pairs of means were different. The Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) critical value was 6.30. The differences between the means had to be greater than this value to be considered

significantly different ($\alpha = .05$). The analyses indicate School A's reading scores significantly improved between year 1 ($M = 77.14$) and year 2 ($M = 86.50$) and did not change between the second ($M = 86.50$) and third ($M = 85.77$) years of SWPBS. There was not a statistical difference in reading scores for School B. School C's scores significantly improved between year 1 ($M = 72.09$) and year 2 ($M = 80.65$) and did not change between year 2 ($M = 80.65$) and year 3 ($M = 78.85$) of SWPBS. Overall, School A and School C's reading scores improved while School B's scores did not change over the 3 years of SWPBS.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics for Kansas State Reading Assessments

Years	School	Means	Standard Deviations	N
2008-09	A	77.14	14.40	22
	B	85.86	8.79	37
	C	72.09	19.44	34
2009-10	A	86.50	7.38	22
	B	84.87	11.75	37
	C	80.65	10.20	34
2010-11	A	85.77	6.60	22
	B	84.57	12.67	37
	C	78.85	12.10	34

A two-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also conducted for student math scores. The two categorical variables used to group the student math scores were year (2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11) and school (A, B, C). The interaction effect for year by school was used to further test differences in student math scores. The results of the

analysis indicated a statistically significant difference between at least two of the nine means ($F = 2.67$, $df = 4, 180$, $p = .034$). See Table 15 for the means and standard deviations for this analysis.

A follow up post hoc was conducted to determine which pairs of means were different. The Tukey's Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) critical value was 5.96. The differences between the means had to be greater than this value to be considered significantly different ($\alpha = .05$). The hypothesis tests for the Kansas State Math Assessments in Table 15 indicate school A's math scores did not change significantly among the three years of SWPBS. School B's math scores decreased significantly between year 1 ($M = 88.7297$) and year 2 ($M = 79.0270$) of SWPBS. The scores increased between year 2 ($M = 79.0270$) and year 3 ($M = 84.1622$), however, the improvement was not statistically significant. School C's math scores did not change significantly over the three years of SWPBS.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics for Kansas State Math Assessments

Years	School	Means	Standard Deviations	N
2008-09	A	90.18	7.08	22
	B	88.73	11.52	37
	C	83.26	14.84	34
2009-10	A	87.95	6.57	22
	B	79.03	15.62	37
	C	77.97	14.48	34
2010-11	A	85.27	8.45	22
	B	84.16	12.15	37
	C	78.44	13.80	34

The additional hypothesis tests for the Kansas State Reading Assessments indicated overall, School A and School C reading scores improved while School B's scores did not change over the 3 years of SWPBS. The additional hypothesis tests for the Kansas State Math Assessments indicated school A's math scores did not change significantly among the three years of SWPBS. School B's math scores decreased significantly between year one and year two of SWPBS and then increased between year two and year three, however, math scores did not improve significantly. School C's math scores did not change significantly among the three years of SWPBS.

Chapter Summary

Results for student *office referrals* indicated a statistically significant relationship was observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented student office referrals. Results for *student-in-school suspensions* (ISS) indicated a statistically significant relationship was observed between the number of years of SWPBS and documented ISS. Results for *out-of-school suspensions* (OSS) indicated there was not a statistically significant relationship between the number of years of SWPBS and documented OSS.

Kansas state student reading scores significantly improved among students who had been exposed to 2 or 3 years of SWPBS. Kansas state student math scores did not significantly change among students who had been exposed to three years of SWPBS. Results for reading and math scores among schools indicated School A and school C's reading scores improved while school B's scores did not change over the 3 years of SWPBS. School B's math scores decreased significantly between year one and year two of SWPBS and then increased between year two and year three; however, math scores

did not improve significantly. There was not a significant change in math scores for Schools A, B and C over three years of SWPBS.

Results for the district climate study indicated there was not a significant relationship observed between the number of years of SWPBS and job satisfaction scores, statements of pride, responses of a safe workplace, or responses of respect and decision making. The hypothesis for high standards and ethics among staff was not tested due to inconsistency and change in the wording of the question over the years the data was collected. A marginally significant relationship was observed between diversity scores and the number of years of SWPBS. Over three years of SWPBS, the number of Strongly Agrees for diversity scores on the survey tended to increase while the number of Disagrees and Neutrals decreased.

For the qualitative portion of the study, the researcher investigated teacher and administrator perceptions of student behavior, student academic scores, and climate to determine if perceptions had changed as a result of implementing SWPBS. Interview responses concerning student behavior, indicated appropriate behaviors were specifically taught and reinforced within a school-wide system of support, directives, and reinforcements from staff. Procedures in the schools were clear and consistent for students. Students were more respectful to staff and each other. Inappropriate behaviors were not totally eliminated; however, they significantly decreased as appropriate behaviors increased. More emphasis was spent on teaching students what was appropriate.

All principal and teacher interviewees noted academic gains were evident in each of their buildings and contributed it to the combined utilization of SWPBS and MTSS.

The interviewees emphasized the need to examine a variety of ongoing school assessments to celebrate academic progress that is not noted on district and state mandated testing due to students that came to school below grade level. Teachers noted the use of SWPBS improved classroom management and behavior in non-classroom areas which allowed for more uninterrupted teaching time.

Responses from all interviewees expressed climate had improved in each building. Present climates were safe, positive and respectful with the overall focus on teaching appropriate social behaviors, and supporting students emotionally and academically. The positive climate included shared responsibility in a safe place conducive to learning. Overall, school climates had moved from correcting climates with negative responses to positive climates focused on noticing and noticing teaching positive behaviors. After three years, the use of SWPBS reinforced positive behaviors, communication, trust, and relationships which were building blocks to social and academic learning and were evident among staff and students. All interviewees agreed the implementation of SWPBS was worthwhile as it reinforced positive interactions among staff and students as it supported learning and acceptable social behavior. The next chapter includes a summary of the study, analysis of the results of chapter four, and implications for further research.

Chapter Five

Introduction

Major challenges face present day educators attempting to meet the academic and emotional needs of diverse learners in classrooms across the country. The single most common request for assistance from teachers is related to behavior and classroom management (Oliver, Wehby, & Reschly, 2011). Chapter one of this study presented the conceptual framework, the purpose, the background and significance of the investigation. A review of related literature regarding the history of school discipline, theories supporting the benefits of SWPBS, challenges of implementing SWPBS, the relationship between school climate and SWPBS, and a summary of the literature review was explored in chapter two. Chapter three described the research and data collection methods. The results of the hypothesis testing and interviews were discussed in chapter four. Chapter five begins with a summary of the study, an overview of the problem explored, the methodology used in the study, a discussion of the findings related to literature, and concludes with implications for implementation, action, and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Study

The mission of schools is to continuously search for methods to provide an environment that promotes the achievement of academic and social competencies for students. Educators face many challenges in meeting these expectations. The researcher examined the relationships between the implementation of SWPBS, behavioral archival data, academic outcomes, and school district climate surveys. The researcher also examined the responses from interviews with principals and teachers for their

perceptions of change in student behavior, academic outcomes, and school climate. This section includes an overview of the problem, a purpose statement, research questions, a review of the methodology, major findings, and findings related to the literature.

Overview of the Problem. Increasing numbers of student behavior incidents in schools interrupt learning. According to Indicator 7 of the 2011 Indicators of School Crime and Safety, during the 2009–10 school year, 23 % of public schools reported that bullying occurred among students on a daily or weekly basis, 9 % reported student acts of disrespect for teachers other than verbal abuse on a daily or weekly basis, 5 % reported that student verbal abuse of teachers occurred on a daily or weekly basis, and 16% reported gang activities during the school year (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011). Classroom disruptions, playground, bathroom, hallway, bus, and lunchroom altercations can require outside intervention such as student assistance teams, counselor support, office referrals, removal from the classroom, and even suspension. Increasing instructional time and improving student learning would promote meeting the Olathe Public School District's annual yearly progress (AYP) mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), a United States Act of Congress concerning the education of children in public schools. The Olathe Public School District was interested in establishing a support system that would enable school staff to select, integrate, and implement behavioral practices for improving academic and behavior outcomes for all students. The results of the study indicate whether the impact of utilizing SWPBS will help the Olathe Public School District improve student behavior, academic learning, and school climate.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions. The purpose of the study was to determine if SWPBS was a viable alternative for the Olathe district schools to improve behavior and academic outcomes for all students. The study also examined the relationship between the implementation of SWPBS and school climate to determine if there was a positive change in school climate.

Review of the Methodology. The quantitative portion of the study involved the collection and analysis of data for three variables. The first variable was documented student behavior incidents measured by office referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions. The second variable was academic achievement measured by student reading and math scores on the Kansas State Assessment. The third variable was school climate measured by employee responses to the Annual Olathe District Climate Survey. The qualitative portion of this study involved interviews with six teachers and three principals of three elementary schools in the Olathe Public School District to find out their perceptions of change in student behavior, academic scores, and school climate after implementing SWPBS for three consecutive years.

Major Findings. The evidence indicated mixed findings. The number of documented student office referrals significantly decreased over the four year span of the study (0, 1, 2, and 3 years). In-school suspensions significantly decreased over the four years of the study. Out-of-school suspensions did not significantly decrease over the four years of the study. Kansas state student reading scores significantly improved among students who had been exposed to 2 or 3 years of SWPBS. Kansas state student math scores did not significantly change among students who had been exposed to three years of SWPBS.

When the researcher analyzed the data for the entire sample, reading scores improved but math did not. When the data was disaggregated by school (A, B, and C), the results were different. School A and school C's reading scores improved while school B's scores did not change over the 3 years of SWPBS. School B's math scores decreased significantly between year one and year two of SWPBS and then increased between year two and year three; however, math scores did not improve significantly. There was not a significant change in School A and School C's math scores.

The researcher examined six dimensions of the climate survey. A relationship was not observed between the number of years of SWPBS and job satisfaction scores, statements of pride scores, responses of a safe workplace, respect and decision making scores. Changes were not observed in scores of high standards and ethics among staff who have been exposed to 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS. A marginal relationship was observed between diversity scores and years of SWPBS. Though not significant, over the three years of SWPBS, the number of Strongly Agrees for diversity scores on the district climate survey increased while the number of Disagrees and Neutrals decreased.

Results of the qualitative interviews with teachers and principals of the three elementary schools indicated that both teachers and principals perceived a significant change in student behavior, academic scores and climate as a result of implementing SWPBS. Students were more respectful to staff and each other. Inappropriate behaviors significantly decreased as appropriate behaviors increased. More emphasis was spent on teaching students appropriate social behavior and supporting students emotionally and academically. The positive climate included shared responsibility in a safe place conducive to learning. All interviewees agreed the implementation of SWPBS was

worthwhile as it reinforced positive interactions among staff and students as it supported learning and acceptable social behavior.

Findings Related to the Literature. The utilization of SWPBS has become an important intervention approach system for schools in the United States with over 9,000 U.S. schools implementing the evidence-based, data-driven framework proven to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase school safety, and support improved academic outcomes (Horner, Sugai, Smolkowski, Eber, Nakasato, Todd, & Experanza, 2009). SWPBS approaches include clear and consistent behavior expectations, procedures for communication expectations to staff and students, as well as encouraging expected behaviors, methods of preventing problem behaviors, data collection systems used to guide decision-making regarding behaviors that need intensive intervention, and classroom behavior management practices and routines that parallel the school-wide discipline system (Sugai et al., 2010). Schools utilizing SWPBS aim to establish a safe and orderly environment with a positive climate in order to maximize teaching and learning opportunities for all students (Campbell, 2009). Campbell stated implementing SWPBS is one proactive approach to aid in reducing disciplinary problems in schools (2009). Simonsen, Sugai, & Negron (2008) completed a cost-benefit analysis which found schools implementing SWPBS saved administrators an average of 15.75 days a year on office discipline referrals, while students saved an average of 79.5 days of instructional time.

Findings from this study support the idea that utilizing SWPBS is a proactive approach to aid in reducing disciplinary problems in schools. This researcher found statistically significant relationships between the number of years of SWPBS and student

behavior to support the studies of Campbell (2009), Simonsen, Sugai, & Negron (2008), and Sugai et al. (2010). Data indicated over the four years, student office referrals decreased and were less than expected by chance. Data indicated over four years, ISS were higher than expected by chance the year prior to implementing SWPBS, decreased the first year of supports, and were within the same range as expected. ISS decreased significantly during the second year, and rose slightly the third year, however; were still less than year one and the year prior to SWPBS. During two of the three years of SWPBS, OSS decreased slightly; however, the numbers were not significantly different than the numbers expected by chance.

According to Epstein, Atkins, Cullinan, Kutash & Weaver (2008), there is a clear relationship between academic performance and student behavior. Academic learning is directly and indirectly impeded by inappropriate and unsafe behavior demonstrated in schools. Therefore, successful discipline, improved school climate, and behavioral competence are integrally related to improving academic outcome. Schools implementing SWPBS aim to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase school safety, and support improved academic outcomes (Horner et al. (2009). Findings from this study support the theories of Epstein, Atkins, Cullinan, Kutash & Weaver (2008) and Horner et al. (2009). Significant changes occurred in Kansas state reading scores among student who had been exposed to 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS. Overall findings for academic improvement in reading and math in the study were mixed. Reading scores significantly improved among students who had been exposed to 2 or 3 years of SWPBS, while math scores did not significantly improve over the three years of SWPBS. Findings among the three schools indicated school A and school C reading scores improved while school B's

scores did not significantly change over the 3 years of SWPBS. Student Kansas state assessment math scores decreased between the first and second year of SWPBS and increased during the third year; however, the scores were not significantly different from the two previous years. The qualitative portion of the study offered additional evidence to support the relationship between SWPBS and academic achievement in both reading and math as principal and teacher perceptions included other types of data and tests to evaluate academic progress.

The literature supports the idea that there is a relationship between school climate, behavior, academic achievement, and SWPBS. Mifflen (2009) stated school culture and climate have an immense influence on students' academic achievement. Campbell (2009), found the implementation of school-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) facilitated positive changes in student attitude, student behavior, and overall school climate. In addition, Campbell stated by utilizing a SWPBS approach, educators and administrators were able to create a school environment that fostered acceptable social behavior and attempted to systematically deter problem behaviors before they happened. According to Johnson, Kraft, & Papay (Armstrong, 2012), the *Harvard Project on the Next Generation of Teachers* results made a link between teacher satisfaction and growth in student achievement. Project results indicated conditions most important for teacher satisfaction were the ones that shaped the social context of teaching and learning. Mifflen (2008) stated school culture has been defined as the belief system which directly influences school climate. Students feel comfortable, valued, accepted, wanted, and secure in a positive environment where they can interact with people whom they trust. Climate reflects the positive or negative feelings toward the school environment.

To support the relationship between school climate, behavior, academic achievement, and SWPBS, this researcher examined six dimensions of the Olathe district employee climate survey to investigate the relationship of survey responses among staff over the 0, 1, 2, and 3 years of SWPBS. The six selected dimensions included job satisfaction, pride in workplace, perceptions of a safe workplace, respect and decision making, high standards and ethics, and the value of diversity. A marginally significant relationship was observed between diversity scores on district climate and years of SWPBS. Total responses were not statistically different from the frequencies expected by chance; however, over the three years of SWPBS, the number of Strongly Agrees for diversity responses on the district climate survey increased while the number of Disagrees and Neutrals decreased. Statistically significant relationships were not observed between SWPBS and the other five survey dimensions. District climate responses indicated significant relationships were not observed among the three years of SWPBS.

The qualitative portion of the study offered additional evidence to support the relationship between school behavior, academic achievement, climate, and SWPBS. The questions on the district climate survey were broad, general, and not specific to the implementation of SWPBS. The questions developed for the principal and teacher interviews were specific to the study's research questions. The interview responses to questions investigating perceptions of change in student behavior supported findings in the literature by Horner, Sugai, Smolkowski, Eber, Nakasato, Todd, & Experanza (2009), Campbell (2009) and Sugai et al. (2010). Responses from the principal and teacher interviewees indicated they perceived students were more respectful and made better

choices for acceptable behavior as a result of SWPBS. Procedures in the school were clear and consistent for students. Prior to SWPBS, interviewees noted numerous behavior problems such as destruction of school property, bullying, inappropriate language, fights, excessive talking, refusal to work or follow directions, back talking, defiance, messes in the bathrooms, and inappropriate behavior on the bus, in the halls, assemblies, lunchroom, and playground resulted in many office referrals and withdrawals of privileges. As a result of SWPBS, appropriate behaviors were specifically taught and reinforced within a school-wide system of support. More emphasis was spent on teaching children what was appropriate. Students responded to the positive directives from staff with making better choices for appropriate behavior and respect for each other. Behaviors in the halls, bathrooms, assemblies, lunchroom, classroom, at recess, and on the bus significantly improved with the use of SWPBS. Inappropriate behaviors were not totally eliminated; however, they significantly decreased, as staff observed an increase in appropriate student behavior choices.

"Viewed as outcomes, achievement and behavior are related; viewed as causes of each other, achievement and behavior are unrelated. In this context, teaching behavior as relentlessly as we teach reading or other academic content is the ultimate act of prevention, promise, and power underlying SWPBS and other preventive interventions in America's schools" (Algozzine, Wang, & Violette, 2011, p. 16). The researcher noted each of the nine interviewees in the study agreed with Algozzine, Wang, and Violette as they expressed the importance of teaching children appropriate behaviors repeatedly, throughout the interviews. All interviewees stated more emphasis was spent on teaching

students appropriate social behavior and supporting students emotionally and academically as a result of implementing SWPBS.

Horner, Sugai, Smolkowski, Eber, Nakasato, Todd, & Experanza (2009) stated the utilization of SWPBS has become an important intervention utilized in U.S. schools to reduce disciplinary incidents, increase school safety, and support improved academic outcomes. Epstein, Atkins, Cullinan, Kutash & Weaver (2008) stated there is a clear relationship between academic performance and student behavior. Responses to interview questions investigating perceptions of change in student academic scores supported findings in the literature that state there is a relationship between the implementation of SWPBS and academic outcomes. All principals and teachers noted academic gains were evident in each of their buildings and attributed the gains to the utilization of SWPBS. Although quantitative measures did not support academic gains in math, the interviewees shared student academic scores indicated consistent progress, noting there were students who came to school below grade level who made significant academic progress in both reading and math, yet still fell in the unsatisfactory section of district and state testing. Principals and teachers of all three schools emphasized the need to examine a variety of tests and work samples, and celebrate individual student progress in addition to district and state mandated tests. All interviewees agreed the use of SWPBS improved classroom management which allowed for more teaching time and helped to establish relationships throughout the school community which supported academic outcomes.

Literature has supported the theory that SWPBS is an effective approach for reducing problem behavior and developing an overall positive school climate (Washburn,

Stowe, Cole, & Robinson, 2007). School culture has been defined as the belief system which directly influences school climate (Mifflen, 2008). According to Mifflen, students feel comfortable, valued, accepted, wanted, and secure in a positive environment where they can interact with people whom they trust. Climate reflects the positive or negative feelings toward the school environment. According to the U S Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2012), the purpose of SWPBS was to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior was the norm.

The interviewee responses to questions investigating perceptions of change in school climate supported findings in the literature from Mifflen (2008), Washburn, Stowe, Cole, & Robinson (2007), and the U S Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (2012) that indicate there is a relationship between the implementation of SWPBS and school climate. Principals expressed the implementation of SWPBS was extremely worthwhile as it reinforced positive interactions among staff and students in addition to supporting learning and acceptable social behavior. School climates had changed from correcting climates with negative responses to safe climates which focused on positive behaviors. Teachers noted students felt safe to make mistakes and were willing to learn from their mistakes which resulted in a positive learning atmosphere. Utilizing SWPBS reinforced communication, relationships, and trust which were building blocks to social and academic learning. Teachers became more supportive of each other and especially supportive of each others' students. The positive climate included shared responsibility in a safe place conducive to learning. Respect was in everyone's vocabulary and it was observable in student and staff behavior.

Conclusions

The conclusion section of the study includes three subsections. The first subsection contains suggestions of implications for action. The second subsection includes recommendations for future research. The third subsection consists of concluding remarks concerning the study.

Implications for Action. The results of this study provide implications for further action. A possible action for the Olathe School District is to continue to analyze data from the three pilot schools in the study implementing SWPBS to analyze changes in behavior, academic learning, and school climate over a longer period of time (5-10 years). Another possible action would be to analyze the changes in behavior, academic scores, and school climate of additional schools in the district that are implementing SWPBS. Quantitative data analyses did not indicate the significant positive changes in climate and math academic scores that were noted by the interviewees (teachers and principals). The development of questions or surveys which explicitly relate to SWPBS would be helpful to explore during staff meetings or professional learning community meetings (PLC's), and would provide helpful feedback on the success and challenges of the program. The Olathe School District would continue to benefit from looking at successful models of programs and current information provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

Recommendations for Future Research. This researcher examined the relationship between the years of SWPBS and student behavior, academic learning, and school climate using quantitative and qualitative measures. The results of this study

presented evidence for the need to conduct further research to strengthen the findings that there is a relationship between SWPBS and student behavior, academic learning, and school climate. The researcher recommends replicating the study in other school environments that are similar to the environment in this study to gain additional information to support the benefits of implementing SWPBS. Replicating the study in environments different than the study would strengthen the findings and provide additional information to compare the relationships between environment, student behavior, academic learning, school climate, and the implementation of SWPBS. The questions utilized by the district climate survey covered broad areas and were not specific to SWPBS. This researcher recommends further research on surveys that have been developed specifically to measure effects of SWPBS in relationship to student behavior, academic learning, and school climate. The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2013) has developed evaluation tools to evaluate the status and impact of SWPBS at multiple levels. The researcher suggests the use of these newly developed evaluation tools to measure effects of SWPBS. Results of the qualitative interviews of the study indicated a need for further research over the effects of the combined use of SWPBS and MTSS to improve academic learning. Each of the interviewees noted the importance of the support and leadership of the principal in the successful implementation of SWPBS. As a final point, the researcher suggests additional research on the relationship of the school principal and successful implementation of SWPBS.

Concluding Remarks. Attempts to control disruptive behaviors cost considerable teacher time at the expense of academic instruction. Educators face

continuous challenges in efforts to establish and maintain safe and orderly classroom environments where teachers can teach and students can learn (Scott, White, Algozzine, & Algozzine, 2009). The research from this study strengthens the evidence that there is a positive relationship between SWPBS student behavior, academic learning, and school climate. These supports foster a positive school climate offering a framework for the adoption and implementation of a continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve academically and behaviorally important outcomes for all students (Sugai, 2013). It is imperative to continue the research to improve the effectiveness of the teaching and learning in our schools.

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Appendix A: Baker Letter of Support for Research

BAKER UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION – GRADUATE DEPARTMENT
8001 COLLEGE BLVD, OVERLAND PARK, KS 66210
913-491-4432

January 25, 2011

Olathe School District
14160 Black Bob Road
Olathe, KS

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written in support of Julie Bliese, a candidate for the degree Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership. Julie has completed all course requirements and portfolio development and presentation and is currently completing requirements for the dissertation. Her study proposal will be considered as an "exempted" study by the Baker University Institutional Review Board. The study intends to investigate the relationship between student achievement, schoolwide behavior systems, and faculty perceptions of school climate. As an "exempted" study, she will analyze three years of Olathe Climate Survey results and state test scores for students in three elementary schools in grades 3-5. All aspects of the study will in no way identify individuals, schools, or the school district.

In addition to serving as department chair, I serve as Mrs. Bliese's major advisor and am thoroughly familiar with the study and its intent. We are anxious to see the results of her research as we know that information helpful to today's schools will become clearer.

If there are questions that would need further follow-up, I would be most pleased to respond.

Sincerely,

Harold B. Frye

Harold B. Frye, Ed.D., Chair
Graduate Education Programs

Appendix B: Olathe School District Research Approval Letter

Olathe Public Schools USD 233

July 13, 2011

Juliann Bliese
935 E. Charlotte Town
Olathe, KS 66061

The research project ***The Effects of School Wide Positive Behavior Supports*** has been approved for the Olathe Public Schools with the following criteria:

- The research will provide the district with additional information regarding the impact School-Wide PBS has had on the academic and behavioral growth of student over the last several years.
- Be sure to get parent consent if needed at any time.
- Provide administrators ample notice for any interviews and/or surveys that you may conduct.
- Heidi Garza, Special Services Coordinator, will serve as district contact for you during this project. You can reach Heidi by email or at 913-780-7329.

Olathe staff members look forward to working with you throughout the project. If you should have any questions or require any assistance, please contact me at 913-780-7918.

Sincerely,

Kim Gillespie
Research Coordinator
Olathe District Schools

cc: Heidi Garza

Appendix C: Baker University IRB Approval Letter and IRB Form

BAKER UNIVERSITY
Own Confidence

August 17, 2012

Ms. Juliann Bliese
935 East Charlotte Town Rd.
Olathe, KS 66061

Dear Ms. Bliese:

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research project application (E-0143-0723-0814-G) and approved this project under Expedited Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

The Baker University IRB requires that your consent form must include the date of approval and expiration date (one year from today). Please be aware of the following:

1. At designated intervals (usually annually) until the project is completed, a Project Status Report must be returned to the IRB.
2. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
3. Notify the OIR about any new investigators not named in original application.
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported to the IRB Chair or representative immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity. If you use a signed consent form, provide a copy of the consent form to subjects at the time of consent.
6. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.

Please inform Office of Institutional Research (OIR) or myself when this project is terminated. As noted above, you must also provide OIR with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If your project receives funding which requests an annual update approval, you must request this from the IRB one month prior to the annual update. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Doolittle, EdD
Chair, Baker University IRB

BAKER UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
GRADUATE DEPARTMENT

Date:
IRB PROTOCOL NUMBER _____
(IRB USE ONLY)

IRB REQUEST
Proposal for Research
Submitted to the Baker University Institutional Review Board

I. Research Investigator(s) (Students must list faculty sponsor first)

Department(s) **School of Education Graduate Department**

	Name	Signature	
1.	Dr. Harold Frye	_____,	Major Advisor
2.	Margaret Waterman	_____,	Research Analyst

Principal Investigator: Juliann Bliese
Phone: 913-980-6902
Email: jblieserw@olatheschools.org and jbliese@att.net
Mailing address: 935 East Charlotte Town Rd. Olathe, Kansas 66061

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Harold Frye
Phone: 913-344-1220
Email: Harold.Frye@bakeru.edu

Expected Category of Review: ___Exempt _X_ Expedited

II: Protocol: The Effects of School-Wide Discipline Using Positive Behavior Supports

Summary

In a sentence or two, please describe the background and purpose of the research.

School-wide positive behavior supports (SWPBS) have surfaced in recent years and are proactive approaches designed to teach alternatives to problem behaviors and prevent discipline problems on an individual, classroom, and school-wide basis.

The purpose of this research study is to investigate the relationship between school-wide positive behavior support systems, student behavior, student achievement, and faculty perceptions of school climate within three elementary schools in the Olathe School District.

Briefly describe each condition or manipulation to be included within the study.

1. Three selected schools were chosen for this study by a team from the Olathe School District (Special Education Services Coordinator, Heidi Garza, Executive director of Teaching and Learning, LuAnn Hermerck, and this researcher) as a result of meeting the specific criteria of having implemented SWPBS from 0 to 3 consecutive years with the same principal as the educational leader of each selected school. Each principal will have the choice to participate or not participate in this research study.

2. This research will utilize quantitative measures to analyze and compare three schools office referrals, in-and-out of school suspensions data from 0 to 3 years of SWPBS implementation.

3. This research will utilize quantitative measures to analyze district state assessment scores from 0 to 3 years of SWPBS implementation.

4. This research will utilize quantitative measures to compare district climate survey results scores of three elementary schools from 0 to 3 years of SWPBS implementation.

5. This researcher will interview the principal of each selected elementary school along with two teachers from each school to obtain qualitative responses to perceptions of the effects of SWPBS from 0 to 3 years of implementation. The principal will be aware of needed data (in-and-out-of-school suspensions

What measures or observations will be taken in the study? If any questionnaire or other instruments are used, provide a brief description and attach a copy.
Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.

Questions to be asked during the interview process and the consent form to be signed by each participant are attached.

Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.

There will be no direct contact with any students. Six teachers and three principals will be interviewed individually. Each interviewee will choose a time that is convenient to them for an interview. These nine individuals will be interviewed for qualitative responses on the effects of SWPBS; however will only be identified as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, Teacher E, Teacher F, Principal 1, Principal 2, and Principal 2.

Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.

Subjects will not be mislead in any way.

Will there be a request for information which subjects might consider to be personal or sensitive? If so, please include a description.

No requests will be made.

Will the subjects be presented with materials which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.

No materials will be used.

Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?

A timer will be set for the interview to culminate in an hour. If the interviewee wishes to continue, the interview will continue.

Who will be the subjects in this study? How will they be solicited or contacted? Provide an outline or script of the information which will be provided to subjects prior to their volunteering to participate. Include a copy of any written solicitation as well as an outline of any oral solicitation.

First, the principal of each elementary school will be asked to participate in this research project. Each principal will then be asked to take the request to their building leadership team. Once the building leadership team agrees to participate in this project, the principal will offer the opportunity of an interview to all teachers on staff. A minimum of two teachers is needed; however, if more teachers volunteer to be interviewed, they will be interviewed.

Copies of letters that verify verbal meetings with information concerning the research requirements are attached.

What steps will be taken to insure that each subject's participation is voluntary? What if any inducements will be offered to the subjects for their participation?

The whole process of participating in the research is voluntary beginning with:

1. the initial contact with principals
2. building leadership team approval to individual participants agreeing to be interviewed
3. teacher choice to participate in the interview process

There will not be inducements offered to subjects for participation in this study.

How will you insure that the subjects give their consent prior to participating? Will a written consent form be used? If so, include the form. If not, explain why not.

Each interview participant will be asked to sign a consent form.

Will any aspect of the data be made a part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject? If so, please explain the necessity.

All data and information will be part of an exempted study as the specific schools, teachers, principals, and students will not be identified. Permission was given by district administration to identify the Olathe School district as the research study source.

Will the fact that a subject did or did not participate in a specific experiment or study be made part of any permanent record available to a supervisor, teacher or employer? If so, explain.

No permanent records will be affected in any way.

What steps will be taken to insure the confidentiality of the data?

The three schools participating in this study will be labeled School 1, School 2, and School 3. All data gathered will correspond to School 1, School 2, and School 3.

Each interviewee will choose a time that is convenient to them for an interview. These nine individuals will be interviewed for qualitative responses on the effects of SWPBS; however will only be identified as Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, Teacher E, Teacher F, Principal 1, Principal 2, and Principal 2.

If there are any risks involved in the study, are there any offsetting benefits that might accrue to either the subjects or society?

No risks are involved.

Will any data from files or archival data be used? If so, please describe.

1. The in-and-out-of school suspension data along with office referrals from each participating elementary principal from 0 to 3 years of SWPBS implementation will be accessed.

2. The district climate scores for each of the three elementary schools from 0 to 3 years of implementation will be accessed.

3. The Olathe district state assessment scores from each of the three participating elementary schools for 0 – 3 years of SWPBS implementation will be accessed.

Appendix D: Olathe District Climate Survey Questions and Statements

Olathe District Climate Survey Questions and Statements

Area Sub Sections	Amount of choices in each section	Questions/Statements
Tenure	5	How many years have you worked for Olathe District Schools?
Position	2	What type of position do you have?
Location	57 or 3	What location do you work at?
Position Type	16	What is your current position?
Demographics	6	How do you identify yourself? (optional)
Education Level	8	What is the highest level of education you completed?
Overall Job Satisfaction	6	Overall, how satisfied are you with your job?
Leadership	6 levels of agreement 10 statements	*I know my school district's mission.*
Strategic Planning	6 levels of agreement 6 statements	*I know the parts of the school district's plan that will affect me and my work.*
Student, Stakeholder, & Market Focus	6 levels of agreement 6 statements	*I am proud to tell others I work for the Olathe School District.*
Human Resource Factors	6 levels of agreement 12 statements	*I have a safe workplace.*
Pay & Benefits	5 levels of opinion 6 statements	*In comparison with people in similar jobs in other school districts, I feel my pay is:*
Process Management	6 levels of agreement 7 statements	*I am treated respectfully and have input into decisions that directly affect my work.*
Educational & Organizational Results	6 levels of agreement 6 statements	*My school district has high standards and ethics.*
Diversity	6 levels of agreement 9 statements	*Diversity is valued at my school.*
District Operations Quality Review: Budget & Finance	6 levels of agreement 13 statements	*The needs of students, faculty, staff, and the community have been addressed by district's budgetary decisions.*
District Operations Quality Review: Technology	6 levels of agreement 7 statements	*I have access to the technology that I need to effectively do my job.*
District Operations Quality Review: Human Resources	6 levels of agreement 10 statements	*I feel comfortable discussing problems or concerns with the HR Department staff.*

Appendix E: SWPBS Research Interview Questions

SWPBS Research Interview Questions

1. **Perceptions of <u>student behavior</u> changed as a result of implementing SWPBS**
   - How do you perceive inappropriate behaviors in your school have changed as a result of SWPBS?
   - What types of behavior problems did your school deal with before SWPBS? How has that changed?
   - Describe how you have implemented SWPBS in your school and the successes & challenges you have experienced.

2. **Perceptions of student <u>academic performance</u> changed as a result of implementing SWPBS**
   - How has student focus and academic performance in the classroom changed with the implementation of SWPBS?
   - How has your teaching changed as a result of implementing SWPBS?
   - Describe how you perceive the staff has changed as a result of SWPBS?

3. **Perceptions of <u>school climate</u> changed as a result of implementing SWPBS**
   - Describe the present learning and social climate in your school.
   - How did the climate in your school change after implementing SWPBS?
   - Convey how worthwhile the implementation of SWPBS has been to your school climate.