

Learn

Progress

# A Family Guide to Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS)

Support



Education





The link between families and Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) is an important one. When families are meaningfully involved in educational activities their children do better in schools. Families play an important part in their child's education and social development.

The presence of parents in schools not only provides additional academic supports but also creates community and cultural connections. In many schools, family participation in the schoolwide positive behavior support process is growing. Family members are part of state, district, and school planning teams and participate in schoolwide activities in a variety of ways. Family involvement helps to provide consistency between home and school, the key to success for all students. Family members participate in the assessment and problem solving process to create individualized positive behavior support plans when necessary for their children.

## *What is Positive Behavior Support?*

Positive behavior support (PBS) includes strategies for preventing problem behavior by changing routines and by teaching new social and communication skills. The goal of PBS is to improve quality of life, not only for the child, but for all the individuals within the child's social network.



## *What is Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)?*

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support is a system that is developed by a school for improving student behavior. It is used:

- by all staff; with all students;
- across all environments pertaining to school (classroom, lunchroom, restroom, playground, bus, etc.); and,
- to help schools to create effective learning environments.

## *How does SWPBS align with Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports?*


MTSS is a framework to create a system to ensure supports to meet student needs both academically and behaviorally. The practices within MTSS are directly aligned with SWPBS.

## *Why does a school choose to use SWPBS?*

Schools that implement SWPBS are schools that desire to develop an effective program to teach and support expected school behaviors. These schools are interested in:

- identifying and teaching expected student behaviors;
- finding ways to reinforce and recognize student behavior; and,
- enforcing consistent meaningful consequences when expectations are not followed.

SWPBS is a planned way to meet the behavioral needs of students in a school. Parents are important in the success of SWPBS; and many choose to use a similar system at home.



# Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support consists of three steps:

## Step 1: Identify and Teach Expected Behavior

- Identify three to five positively stated expectations across environments.
- Provide examples of the desired behaviors, including for the cafeteria, bus, and social areas such as the gym or playground.
- Post the expectations throughout the building.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn and practice expectations across all settings.

Teaching the behavioral expectations means that the SWPBS team must identify what the expectations are in different locations across the school day. The team will develop a teaching matrix of the behaviors expected. They will be different in different environments.

For example, let's consider the expectation of **Respect**.

A teaching matrix would include details on what respect "looks like" in the classroom, bus, cafeteria, or outdoors. The example below is part of a teaching matrix. It includes classroom, music class, gym, lunch, outdoors and media lab for an elementary school.

**Teaching Matrix**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Gym</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Outdoors</b>	<b>Media/Lab</b>
Take turns	Use manners	Be a good listener	Say please and thank you	Treat the equipment properly	Use the computers, books, magazines and furniture correctly
Follow teacher directions	Look at teacher	Take turns	Listen to adult direction	Treat others the way you want to be treated	
Use appropriate voice level	Listen		Use inside voices		

This is part of a teaching matrix. Notice the lunchroom and outdoor recess expectations. The entire staff including the lunchroom and recess staff would teach all students these expectations through lessons, role-playing, and practice. The staff focus on the positive (expected) behaviors by reinforcing and recognizing expected student behavior, rather than punishing students for not following expectations.



## Step 2: Positively Reinforce and Recognize Expected Behaviors

When students meet schoolwide expectations, school staff will note their success with positive reinforcement. This might include praise or coupons that can be used to purchase items or special activities at school. It might include weekly drawings for rewards, special privileges, or recognition during student assemblies. All staff (principal, teachers, lunchroom staff, bus drivers, librarians, janitor, etc.) use the system.

## Step 3: Enforce Meaningful Consequences for Violations

In addition to teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors, the school will identify a consistent way to respond to problem behavior when it occurs. The strategies to address challenging behaviors will be shared with students, staff and parents. This will help everyone to know what behaviors violate the expectations. The process should be shared with families in the school discipline handbook as well as through regular reports. Problem behaviors typically fall under the categories of minor or major offenses.

- Minor behaviors are dealt with by building staff or the classroom teacher.
- Major violations are managed by administrative staff.



## *Levels of Schoolwide Support*

Schools that use SWPBS create and maintain supports to meet the needs of ALL students. These supports are based on the understanding that specific behaviors need to be taught, not just expected. To ensure that all students receive the support that they need to be successful, the school will develop a continuum of support as described below.

### **1. Universal support (schoolwide behavior support):**

Behavioral support is provided for ALL students throughout the school.

These supports include:

- Positive discipline that is proactive
- Behavior expectations that are taught
- Active supervision and monitoring
- Positive reinforcement
- Social skills instruction
- Fair and corrective discipline
- Parent training and collaboration

## 2. **Small group support:**

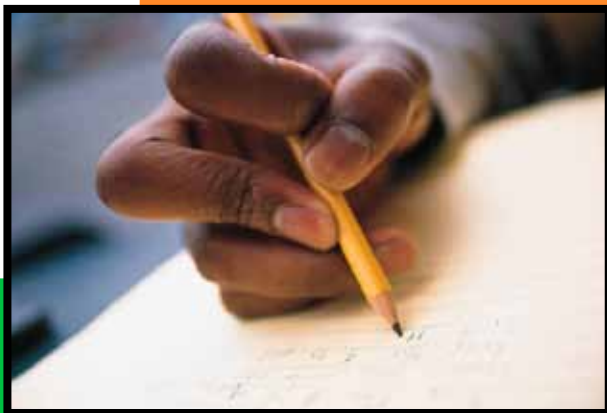
This level of support provides additional help for students who need more support. Interventions are more intensive and are for a smaller number of students. These are often provided in small groups and include:

- Social skills groups
- Conflict resolution
- Self management programs
- Adult mentors (checking in)
- Special seating or special schedule

## 3. **Targeted support (focused on the individual child):**

Intensive, individual supports for a few students with challenging behaviors. These supports are used when universal and small group/classroom support are not effective in teaching behavioral skills in all settings. This more intensive level of support may include:

- Intensive social skills instruction
- Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA)
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- Interagency collaboration
- Intensive collaboration with family
- Intensive family-based interventions, when appropriate



# Positive Behavior Support and Special Education

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004, parents are members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. This team designs an IEP which is the educational plan for a student receiving special education services.

## IDEA Requirements

- IDEA requires that when a student's behavior impedes his or her or others' learning, the IEP team must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies to address the behavior. Team members are not required to use positive behavioral supports, but must consider whether to use them. SWPBS is one of the very few approaches to teaching and learning that IDEA singles out as effective.
- IDEA intends to target behavior that has a major effect. Such behaviors are those that are significantly disruptive and impede the learning of others as well as a behavior that is likely to occur again.
- IDEA requires that whenever a school district applies "long term" discipline (more than 10 days) to a student, it must continue to educate the student; it must also determine or assess whether the student's behavior is a manifestation (result) of the student's disability.
- The school may decide that a Functional Behavior Assessment is needed and develop a Behavioral Intervention Plan if the assessment suggests one is necessary.

Creating a **POSITIVE**  
and **SAFE SCHOOL**  
environment for **ALL**  
**STUDENTS**







## *What is a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)?*

An FBA is a process by which information about why a child engages in challenging behavior is gathered. The reason for this information is to determine how the behavior functions to meet student needs, as well as determining situations and settings that trigger problem behavior. This information is then used to create an effective Behavior Intervention Plan.

## *What is a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)?*

A BIP is a written plan that a school will follow to address the student's behavior that resulted in disciplinary action. A BIP may be written for any student that needs intensive behavior support and is included as part of the IEP, if the student has one.

*When parents are part of the IEP team and help develop BIP plans, this ensures that parents will help to carry out the behavior intervention plans at home and in the community. This helps the student develop skills across all environments.*

# *Family Involvement in SWPBS*

**T**eaching behaviors that schools expect to see works best when there is consistency across home and school settings. Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support is a schoolwide approach to help all children learn to self-manage behaviors. Parent involvement is a key feature and important in all aspects of SWPBS. A strong partnership between the school and family is important because when parents are involved, outcomes for children are better.

Participating in a SWPBS initiative is more than volunteering to help with a school field trip or help out in the classroom. It is a willingness to help participate in your own child's positive behavioral support program, and to participate in SWPBS planning to help other families.

## *Family Involvement Strategies in SWPBS*

### **Schoolwide**

Learn about SWPBS

- Read materials offered by your child's school related to SWPBS
- Learn about the school's SWPBS model

Participate in SWPBS planning

- Help the school to understand family priorities and issues
- Help the school understand community cultural values, beliefs and practices
- Participate in discussion to build family and school agreement on schoolwide expectations for behavior

Use SWPBS strategies in home and community environments

- Teach behavior expectations to your children
- Use and reinforce PBS strategies at home and in the community



## Help build parent participation in SWPBS

- Help other families understand positive behavior supports
- Link with and support other school families

## Help get community involvement

- Link with community resources and actively engage in community supports for the school's efforts (i.e. search for donations and free resources in the community for PBS reinforcement programs).

## Small Group

- Help the teacher to understand your family's values, beliefs, and practices
- Help school staff to develop and implement "targeted" interventions for your child

## Individual

- Participate on your child's individual behavior support team, if he or she has one
- Share your child's strengths and needs in order to develop a behavior plan
- Help the team to understand strategies that are most acceptable to you
- Advocate for your child's needs with other team members
- Review outcome data to determine if the behavior plan is effective

Traditional ways of dealing with problem behaviors through punishment are not effective in changing behavior. It is exciting to see schools adopt SWPBS, because the model approaches behaviors as skills that need to be developed. It approaches behavior as an instructional need. It addresses parent concerns with safety for all children. It helps schools create effective environments that improve teaching and learning.

Parents of children with behavior challenges are important in a system of SWPBS because they already know that punishment does not teach skills. Parents already know what individual strategies may work with their own child. Parents are important contributors in developing SWPBS in their child's own school, because parents have a great deal at stake - the lives and futures of their children. By becoming involved, parents can have a vital role in improving school climate, safety and instructional time. Most importantly, parents can have a role in helping their child develop the positive behavior skills that are the foundation for a successful future.

# Where can I find out more information about SWPBS?

Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC)  
1-866-711-6711  
[www.kpirc.org](http://www.kpirc.org)

Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE)  
1-800-203-9462  
[www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)

Kansas PBS website  
[www.pbskansas.org](http://www.pbskansas.org)

Families Together, Inc. (PTI)  
1-800-264-6343  
[www.familiestogetherinc.org](http://www.familiestogetherinc.org)

Pacer Center  
[www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org)

Beach Center on Disabilities  
[www.beachcenter.org](http://www.beachcenter.org)

Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS)  
[www.kansasmtss.org](http://www.kansasmtss.org)

*Talk to your child's teacher or principal for more information about how SWPBS is being implemented in your child's school.*

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