



Staff **BUY-IN** Guide



Need for support

Due to the multitudinous issues facing society today, support within the school system for educators and students is more vital than ever before. As a result, multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) initiatives like **Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS)** are becoming increasingly popular.

Many studies within the past three years are sounding the alarm about rapidly growing levels of stress, anxiety, and depression among students and teachers in the United States. According to a 2022 report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), **poor mental health among children continues to be a substantial public health concern.** Similarly, an independent study conducted by the Rand Corporation found that **a much higher proportion of teachers reported frequent job-related stress and symptoms of depression than the general adult population.** Because of this, **60% of educators have reported that they enjoy their jobs less** than in previous years.

Often, new campus or district-wide program roll-outs are met with skepticism from teachers and staff and PBIS implementation is no different. Participants in the 2015 study "**Perceived Enablers and Barriers Related to Sustainability of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports**", stated that administrative support was mission critical for PBIS success.

- "Administrative support is the most crucial part if PBIS will be effective. Without it, no matter how hard the team will try to change things, it will not work."
- "Without a strong leader and staff buy-in the program will fall apart."

Leading the learning

As an administrator, you are a lead learner on your campus. Keeping this leadership philosophy at the forefront of your mind is never more important than when it comes to PBIS implementation. Students and staff look to you to lead with passion, empathy, grit, and a growth mindset. Be willing to lead alongside your teachers and fail forward as you seek to foster a culture of inclusion, communication, and trust on your campus between staff, students, and administration.

Supportive PBIS leadership is:

- Overt: Obvious passion for and belief in PBIS
- Consistent: Follows through with plans, processes, and promises
- Inclusive: Involves teacher leaders and parent/community support
- Communicative: Models PBIS in their positive communication style
- Transparent: Expectations, objectives, and processes are clear
- Organized: Maps out and tracks goals
- Reflective: Seeks feedback





Lead with your 'why'

Start by explaining why PBIS is needed to establish a safer and more positive climate at your particular school. Share meaningful research, data, and anecdotes with your staff to help them see how PBIS can be a valuable framework for students and adults alike.

Educational researcher John Hattie's body of work demonstrates that cultivating a schoolwide culture of collective success is based largely on what he refers to as "**Collective Teacher Efficacy**" or CTE. Fostering CTE and changing the culture on a campus is no small feat. To do this, focus on your staff's collective ability to enact change by establishing relationships and rapport with your staff.

Building consensus by inviting a variety of staff, family, and community partners to give input on your school's PBIS implementation can increase buy-in. Additionally, establishing **horizontal power structures** that compliment the existing hierarchical structures in place at your school helps teachers feel more empowered and connected to one another.



Know your people

Your staff will likely require some reassurance that you are not asking them to merely chase the next educational initiative to check a box. Expect that some of your staff will need some processing time, while others might be worried about how PBIS implementation could affect their day to day responsibilities. The best way to know what your staff needs is to engage in conversations with them.

Live your commitment

Because buy-in works from the top down, schoolwide engagement in PBIS truly starts with you and your leadership team. If you and your fellow administrators are not 100% invested in making your school's PBIS initiative work, teachers and students will take notice. Show administrative support by:

- Allotting time for PBIS planning and implementation
- Creating a budget for PBIS incentives
- Embedded PBIS staff training





Show staff the light

What is the one thing that teachers everywhere want? More time. Physicist Albert-László Barabási famously said, "Time is our most valuable nonrenewable resource"; this holds particularly true in education.

Before you roll-out PBIS to your staff, pull your office discipline referral data and work through the **Cost Index for Discipline Referrals** by Barrett and Scott (2006). Seeing how much time is currently being spent on office discipline referrals can be a very eye-opening experience for teachers. Explain how PBIS can buy back instructional time. Referral data paired with PBIS success stories from nearby or comparable schools is often a powerful tool for generating buy-in.



As a leader, model how to use time wisely by:

- Using strategies for streamlining meetings (agenda, roles, action items, etc.).
- Establishing clear priorities and objectives to be completed by your staff within a reasonable timeline.
- Assisting teams on your campus with time management by walking them through time-saving processes that can reveal practices that need to be pruned or made more efficient.

Empower teacher leaders

Because PBIS is not a packaged curriculum, its implementation needs to be tailored to your campus' specific needs. The educators on your campus possess a great deal of knowledge about students, campus climate, and procedures. Working collaboratively to leverage your staff's input and skills can greatly strengthen your program.

Expanding the leadership capacity of teachers not only builds the trust and relationships between administration and staff, it also puts educators in a position to learn and grow inside and outside of the classroom. Investing the necessary time and money into growing teachers as leaders, allows staff to engage more meaningfully with PBIS.

Acknowledge your staff

PBIS should be modeled to staff in all aspects, especially when it comes to celebrating shared successes and recognizing individuals. Consider setting up a rewarding system for staff to acknowledge their efforts in carrying out your school's PBIS framework. **PBIS Rewards' Teacher Rewards** feature can help you do exactly that!





Lead with a team

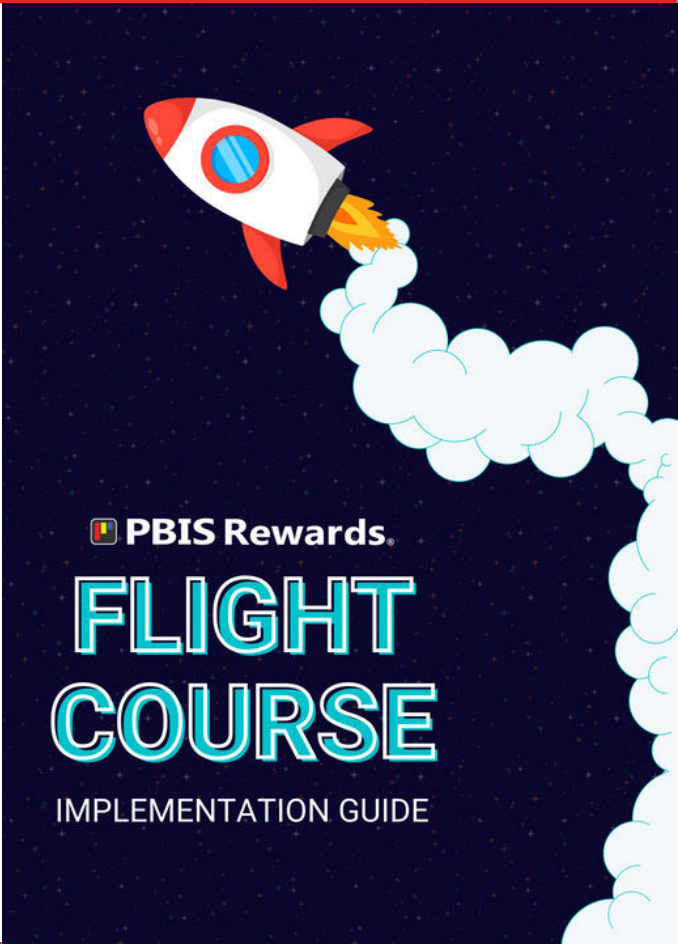
Turnover of critical school staff such as administrators and teachers is going to happen year to year. However, building a strong **PBIS Leadership Team** can maintain continuity of your school's initiative through times of change. Therefore, it is crucial that a school's PBIS team be comprised of teachers, staff, and administrators.

This way, your team will be made up of a solid group of leaders with a variety of perspectives and specialties and as such, can "hold down the fort" in the event that your campus loses personnel that were heavily involved in PBIS. You can even invite "guest" collaborators to your meetings like parents, students, and community partners.

Lead with action

You and your PBIS Leadership Team must determine priorities and take definitive action throughout implementation. The best way to determine your campus' priorities and growth areas is to sit down with your PBIS team and work through the **Implementation Guide**.

No PBIS initiative is perfect, but it should be approached strategically and executed with focused intentionality. This guide and workbook will allow your team to think through important PBIS decisions and identify potential challenges. It will serve as a living document to be reviewed and revisited.





Positive school climate depends on relationships

The overarching goal of schoolwide PBIS is to make each campus a more positive place. This outcome relies on continued collaboration between staff, students, administrators, families, and community partners. One powerful tool you have at your disposal is the common vocabulary that you and your PBIS Leadership Team will establish. Use of common language across your school is incredibly important. The intentional and consistent use of terms related to PBIS helps establish expectations initially and serves as a unifier throughout implementation.

Remember, PBIS fidelity requires a change in mindset. Solid implementation is a marathon, not a sprint. Sustained buy-in among staff and students will ultimately be the determining success factor of your PBIS initiative.

**READY? SET?
TIME TO BEGIN!**

Find out how PBIS Rewards can support you and your school in your PBIS goals!

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