

Rhode Island Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Annual Report 2016-2017

AUTHORED BY

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Promoting Membership in School, Work and Community



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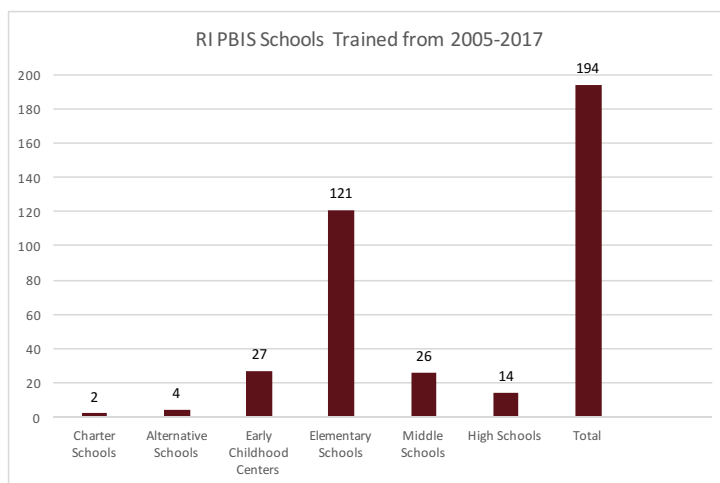
www.sherlockcenter.org
www.ripbis.org
www.rimtss.net

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RI PBIS

Rhode Island has been implementing a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework to improve school climate and address problem behaviors in schools in the state since 2005. In 2012 RI PBIS evolved into an integrated Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) framework addressing students' behavioral and academic needs for Rhode Island students. This report highlights the growth RI PBIS has undergone in recent years and the impact this initiative has had on Rhode Island student outcomes.

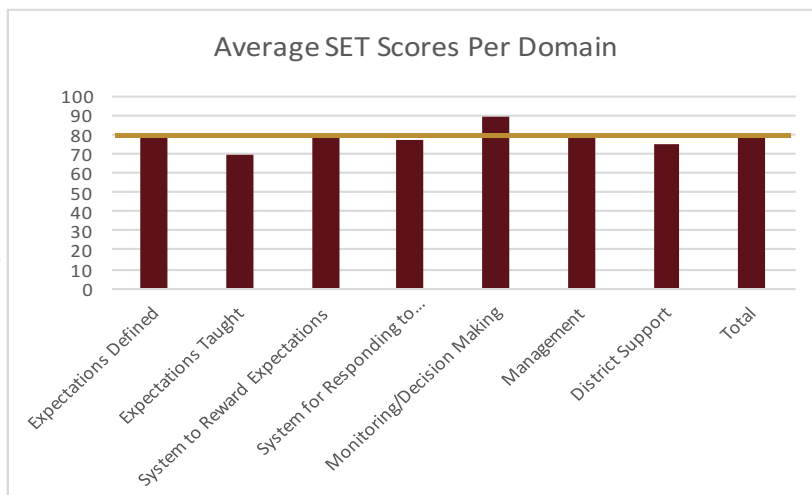
The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College administers the RI PBIS program. At the inception of the program in 2005, the Sherlock Center trained individual schools in a cohort model. Starting in 2009, the Sherlock Center adopted a train-the-trainer model to build district capacity, with the entire district committing to fully implementing PBIS in three to five years. The district identifies a District Trainer and District Coaches that act as liaisons between the Sherlock Center and their district schools. With technical assistance and training from the Sherlock Center, they also commit to training school-level coaches to develop long-term internal capacity within the district. The program is integrated into the RI MTSS program that combines PBIS and Response-To-Intervention to provide a whole continuum of academic and behavioral supports for students. Since 2005 the number of districts implementing PBIS has increased to most of the 35 districts in Rhode Island. In 2007 the first Early Childhood cohort, consisting of 11 early childhood centers, was trained and in 2011 the first high school cohort, consisting of 9 high schools, was trained. Since 2005 194 schools in 30 districts have been trained.



Fidelity

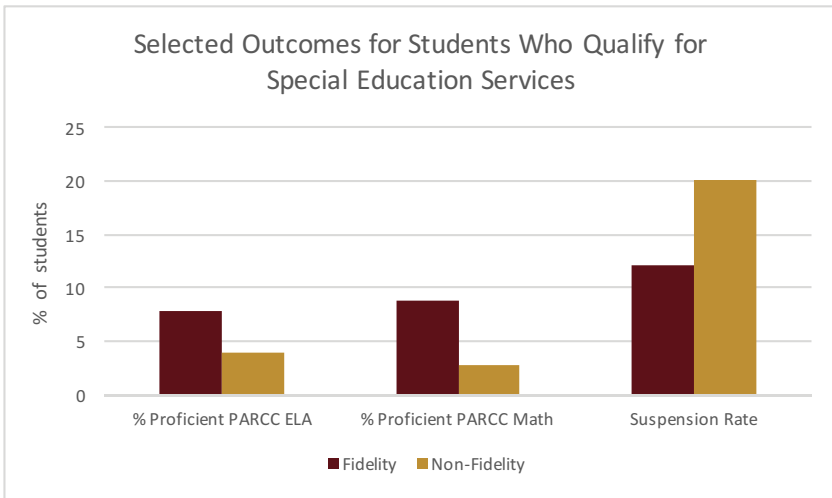
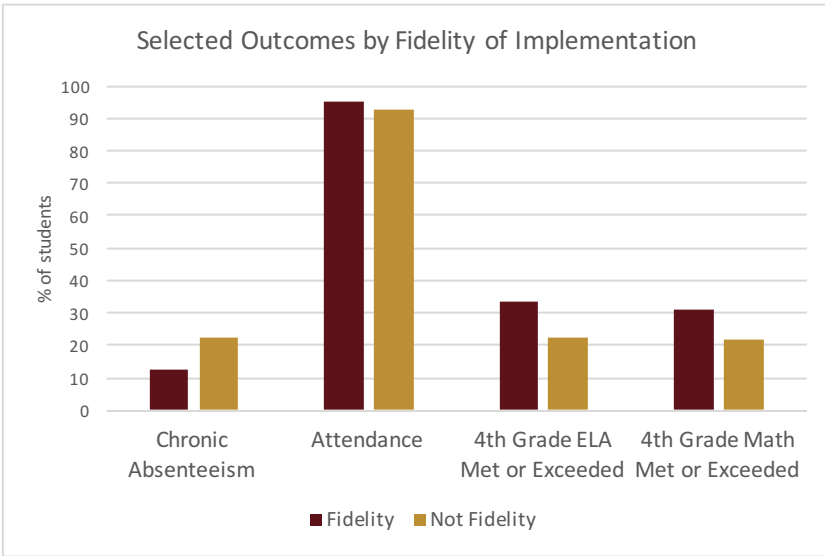
The main instrument RI PBIS utilizes to assess fidelity is the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET*), which is an external assessment of PBIS implementation at the universal level. Sherlock Center staff or district support staff conduct evaluations for the SET that include teacher and student interviews, classroom observations, and product/policy reviews. To be considered implementing with fidelity, a school must obtain a score of 80% on two domains, Expectations Taught and Total Average Score. RI PBIS has taken this a step further to consider implementation with fidelity at 80% across each domain. Among this group, 50% of schools achieved fidelity for the 15-16 year, with an average score of 88 across each domain.

The Sherlock Center offers schools additional measures to utilize for assessment purposes. Among these are the ISSET, or Individual Student Systems Evaluation Tool, the BOQ, or Benchmarks of Quality, and the SAS, or Self-Assessment Survey. The BOQ is a self assessment that measures the implementation of Tier 1 supports in a school. Teams within the school can complete this on their own, which allows them to self-monitor on a quarterly and annual basis. The ISSET, in comparison, measures targeted Tier II and intensive Tier III supports existing within a school. It is completed by an outside evaluator, in this case a Sherlock Center staff member, and provides schools with an external assessment of how the school is meeting the needs of their students who need additional supports within the tiered PBIS framework. The SAS tool measures staff perceptions of how the program is being implemented at all levels and can provide an opportunity to engage stakeholders and to provide structured feedback on the program. The combination of these assessment tools provides schools a well-rounded and balanced picture of how PBIS is implemented, data on whether or not they are implementing with fidelity, and what areas need improvement.



*SET- developed out of the Educational and Community Supports at the University of Oregon

Implementing with fidelity is associated with higher attendance rates and greater growth in academic performance. In RI PBIS schools implementing with fidelity in the 2015-16 school year, reporting SET scores, the average chronic absenteeism rate was 12.6% compared to 22.6% for schools not implementing with fidelity. Similarly, the average attendance rate for schools implementing with fidelity was 95.2% compared to 92.4% respectively. Of those schools implementing with fidelity, 60% of schools increased both ELA and Math PARCC scores between the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years, whereas only 40% of schools not implementing with fidelity increased both ELA and Math scores.



RI PBIS Highlight School Veazie Street Elementary School Providence, RI

As the first school in Providence trained in PBIS, Veazie Street Elementary is a leading example for how a PBIS program can evolve and respond to changing school environments. Veazie is an example of resiliency in staff and students. Since initiating PBIS in 2005, they have experienced several administrator changes, staff turnover, and PBIS leadership changes. Despite those challenges, they reduced problem behaviors from 2,100 to 960 (120% decrease) within the first two years of implementation. When Veazie Street Elementary noticed more students experiencing trauma, they invested in additional Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. They also partnered with Behavior Health Solutions to provide family services and to support social emotional learning for all students. The Veazie PBIS team also encouraged parental involvement through social emotional learning workshops and establishing a behavioral network.

“PBIS has been ingrained in our school for so long, we don’t see it as a separate program anymore,” notes Principal Colleen Caswell. The Survey Works data speaks to the success of these established initiatives on student perceptions of behavior policies. In the most recent student survey, 89.1% of students surveyed indicated that their school’s rules are fair, compared to 82.6% statewide. Additionally, 96.2% of Veazie Street Elementary students compared to 94.7% of all students statewide responded “yes” to “My teachers care about me.” The PBIS team hopes to continue these established practices and adapt to changes in student demographics as they transition into an MTSS framework in the next school year.

The Sherlock Center, as a University Center on Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD), is committed to serving the needs of students with disabilities through technical assistance. One of the goals of PBIS implementation is to provide more in-class supports for students with disabilities in order to facilitate full inclusion into the general education classroom.

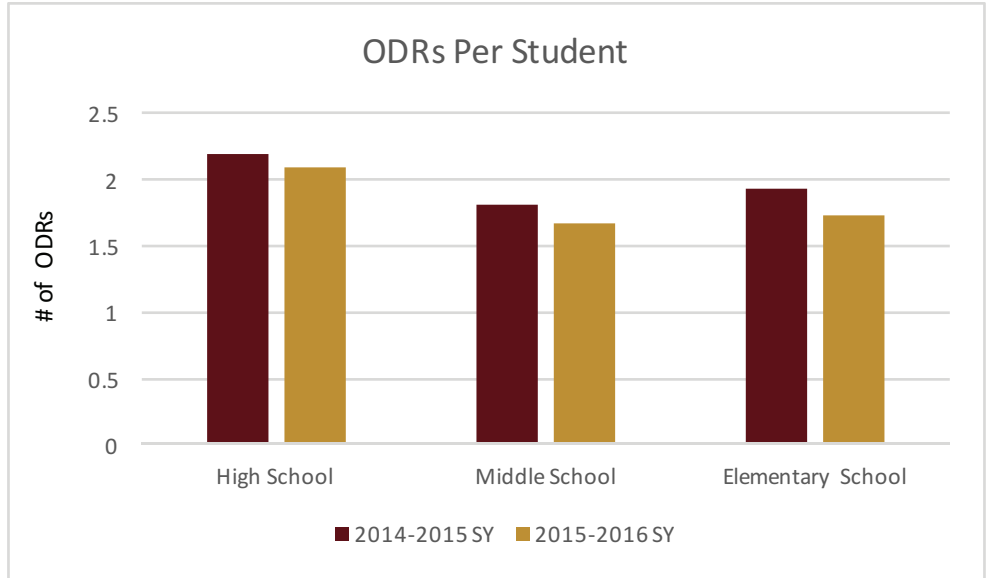
For students with disabilities it is evident that implementing PBIS with fidelity matters for student outcomes. For those students with disabilities in schools that were implementing with fidelity, there was a higher percentage of students scoring proficient on Math and ELA PARCC exams and lower suspension rates compared to students with disabilities in schools not implementing with fidelity.

Impact

The RI PBIS program measures success through the reduction of office discipline referrals (ODRs), out of school suspensions, and increased academic achievement for all students, in particular, students with disabilities. Most schools in the program are using SWIS suite, or School-Wide Information Systems, for data entry and collection, but Aspen and Skyward are also popular data management platforms.

ODRs

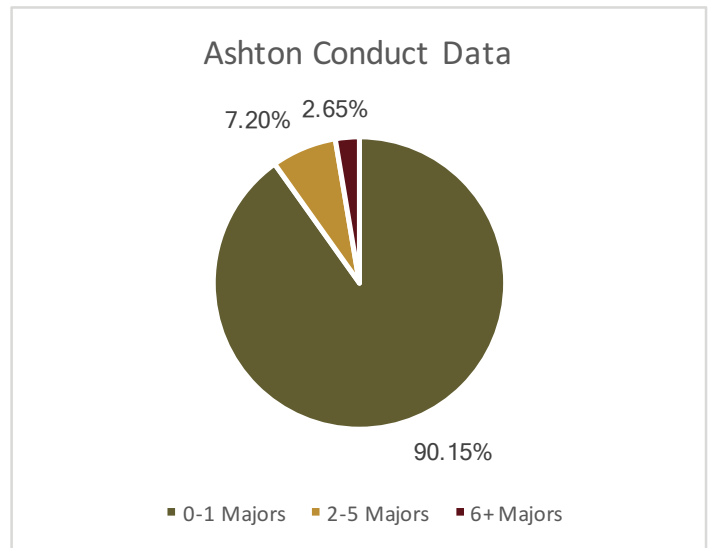
Lower rates of ODRs over time demonstrate that a school is taking more proactive steps to addressing problem behaviors in schools. Of schools reporting ODRs in SWIS, the average decrease in ODRs between the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years were .179 ODRs per student. The graph to the right disaggregated ODRs per student by elementary, middle, and high schools for school years 2014-15 and 2015-16. These graphs show how ODRs have decreased for elementary, middle, and high schools over this period.



RI PBIS Highlight School Ashton Elementary School Cumberland, RI

Ashton Elementary is a notable school for implementing PBIS with fidelity for consecutive years and for reducing the overall number of major referrals, particularly through programs such as Check-in/Check-out (CICO). Ashton Elementary has consistently had 85% or more students receiving 0-1 major referrals for the entire year for the past 5 years. National norms encourage schools to achieve 80-90% of students responding (0-1 referrals), less than 10% at risk (2-5), and less than 5% needing individualized interventions (6+). The chart below illustrates the percentage of students currently responding to universal supports, at risk, and who may require individualized supports.

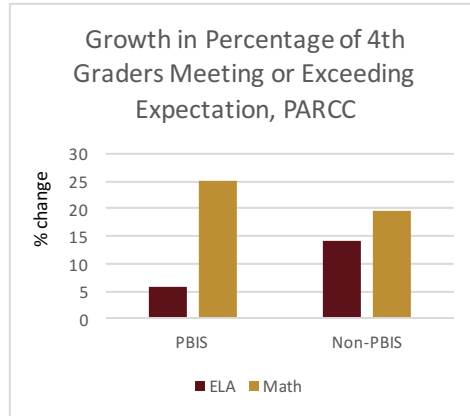
It is evident that Ashton Elementary is by far exceeding the national norms listed above. Jim Field, the PBIS Trainer for Cumberland, attributes this to staff effort and consistency with universal PBIS supports. There are several key areas the RI PBIS team emphasizes, such as building connections with all students, clearly defining and teaching expectations in all areas, acknowledging students for exhibiting school-wide expectations, responding consistently to unexpected behaviors, and increased family involvement and communication. "Once you have implemented it and implemented it well, there is no going back; it makes too much sense!" - Nidia Karbonik, Principal.



Academic Achievement

While positive changes in standardized achievement scores do not perfectly measure student learning, this is a common metric used to gauge the effectiveness of PBIS programs. Compared to Non-PBIS schools, RI PBIS schools show larger gains in achievement for math and reading.

For Rhode Island schools, between school years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectation for Grade 4 PARCC ELA scores increased by 5.6%, and PARCC Math scores increased by 24.9%. Comparatively, Non-PBIS ELA scores increased by 14%, and math scores increased by 19.7% over this time.



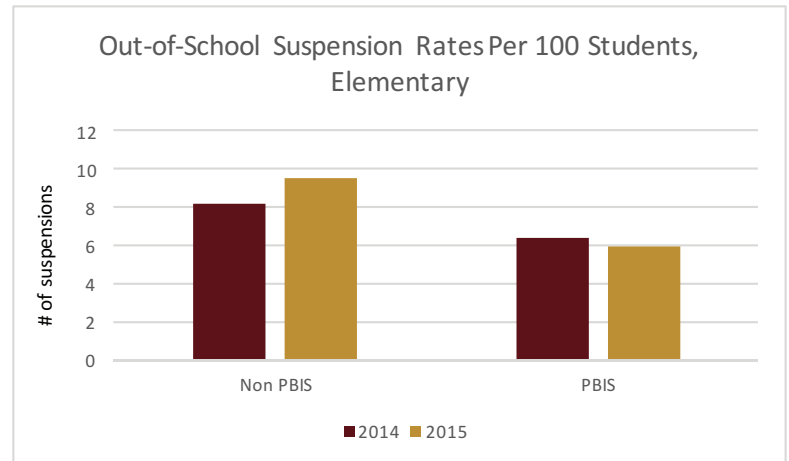
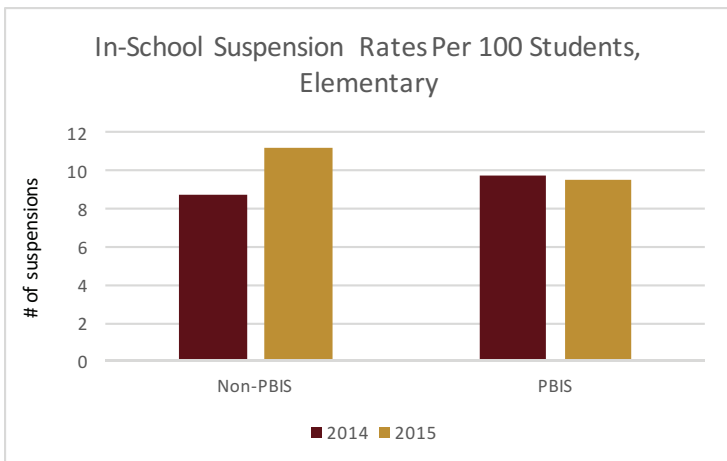
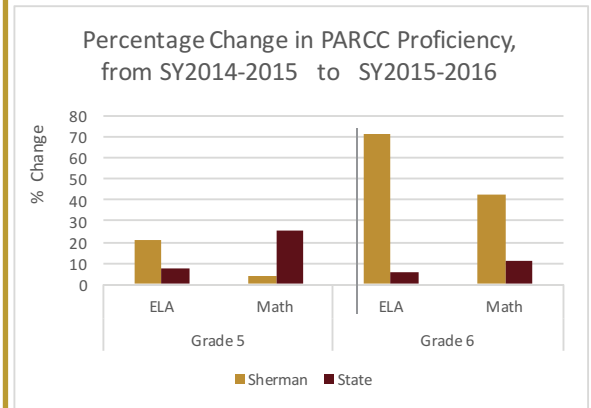
Suspensions

Modern behavior programs, including PBIS, promote other consequences to the same infractions that traditionally result in students receiving out-of-school suspensions. Successful PBIS programs will show a decrease in total out-of-school suspensions over time. For RI districts that are implementing PBIS, the average out-of-school suspension rate was 6.95%, compared to Non-PBIS districts, where the average out-of-school suspension rate was 9.5% for the 2015-2016 school year. Differences between PBIS and Non-PBIS districts can also be seen when districts are disaggregated by urbanicity.

One concern that may arise when out-of-school suspension rates drop is whether or not schools have increased in-school suspensions as a result. For RI schools, this does not appear to be the case. The average in-school suspension rate for 2014-2015 for PBIS schools was 9.7% compared to 9.5% for 2015-2016. For Non-PBIS schools, the trend is reversed; the average in-school suspension rate was 8.7% for 2014-2015 and 11.2% for 2015-2016.

RI PBIS Highlight School Sherman Elementary School Warwick, RI

Sherman Elementary is a model for data-driven decision making in the RI PBIS framework. Teachers at the same grade level collaborate on a bimonthly basis to look at behavior and academic data, and drill down data to identify areas for targeted intervention. The frequency with which grade-level and school-level teams meet helps to sustain the program. Staff transitioned smoothly into MTSS given that the practice of continuous data monitoring was well established in the culture of the school. The principal and district coach credit their successful shift in culture in the building to transparency, teacher training, and administrative support from the RI PBIS coaches. The academic data for Sherman Elementary reflects this successful change under RI PBIS, particularly for changes in math scores and for grades 5 and 6 from School Year (SY) 2014-2015 to SY 2015-2016.

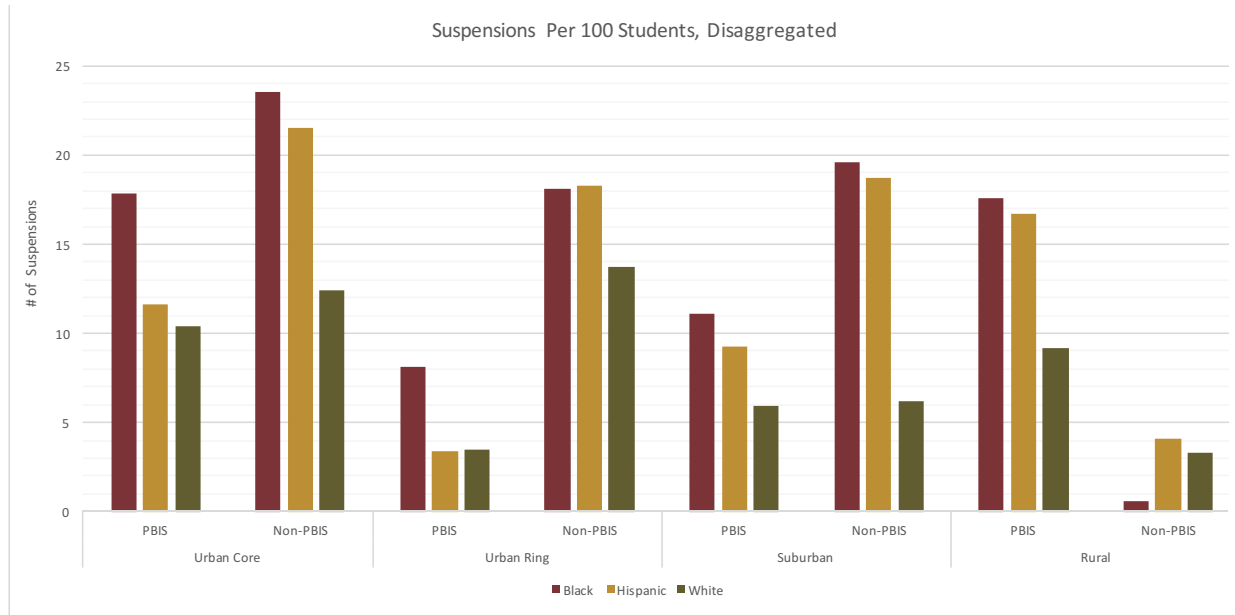


Disproportionality

Disproportionality is an issue faced by many Rhode Island districts.

Disproportionality is evidenced by the over-representation of minority students in special education placements and the disproportionate discipline of minority students. The group of students most commonly affected by this are black males. Similar disproportionality can be seen for students being suspended. For all Rhode Island students in the 2013-14 school year, black students made up 8% of all students yet 14% of all students suspended. Hispanic students made up 24% of all students but 35% of all students suspended. White students made up 60% of all students but 46% of all students suspended.

Evidence of a successful PBIS program addressing disproportionality can be seen in proportional disciplinary actions to the total number of minority students in the school. The following chart shows that on average, black and Hispanic students are suspended at lower rates in PBIS schools than in Non-PBIS schools. For example, the suspension rates for black students in PBIS was 13.65, compared to 15.46 for Non-PBIS schools.



Similarly, the suspension rate for Hispanic students was 10.25 for PBIS schools and 15.65 for Non-PBIS schools. Although suspensions are generally lower in PBIS schools, students of color appear to be suspended at much higher rates in both PBIS and Non-PBIS schools. The exception being in rural schools, where black and Hispanic students are less than 1% of the student population.

Next Steps

Important to any program evaluation is identifying areas of improvement and setting goals for the future. For RI PBIS, there are several priorities for the upcoming school years that are especially relevant. These goals and priorities build from the work and lessons learned from the past 12 years of implementing PBIS and transitioning into an MTSS framework. Moving forward, the RI PBIS team hopes to focus on:

- Identifying a coherent and clear MTSS framework for schools
- Identifying strategies for moving schools from a PBIS to MTSS framework
- Evaluating the impact of the transition to MTSS on student outcomes
- Increasing data collection and sharing among stakeholders
- Data collection to evaluate PBIS/MTSS impact for student subgroups and fair and equitable treatment of subgroups
- Identifying benchmarks of successful programs, such as principal turnover, leadership and coaching, team functioning, school climate ratings, and levels of parent engagement
- Long-term implementation and sustainability

Sources

In addition to internal data from districts (see below), the following sources were used to create this report:

- Rhode Island Department of Education Data Collection Specifications - Discipline
- RI Suspension Reports
- www.ride.ri.gov
- www.infoworks.org
- www.pbis.org
- www.pbisapps.org
- www.rikidscount.org

Thank you to the Sherman Elementary School in Warwick, Ashton Elementary School in Cumberland, and Veazie Street School in Providence for their participation as RI PBIS Highlights Schools. A special thank you to the RI MTSS Team and to Providence, Warwick, Lincoln, Coventry, Cumberland, Narragansett, Exeter/West Greenwich, South Kingstown, Barrington, Burrville, and all of the RI districts that assisted with the data presented in this report.