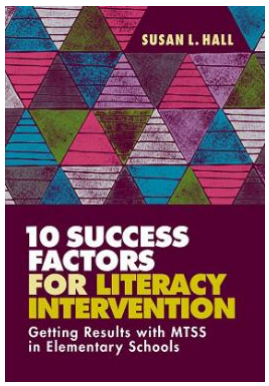
PBIS/AMP Update

December 2019

Within this newsletter

1. We will provide helpful hints to deal with holiday stress and student behavior.
2. We will provide eight characteristics of effective intervention instruction. We want to ensure that our AMP/RTI/MTSS process is two pronged with both behavior and academics addressed.
3. In addition, there is a list of required SWIS "to dos."

A significant portion of the information contained within this update is taken directly from the following.



Hall, S. L. (2018). *10 Success factors for literacy intervention: getting results with Mtss in elementary schools*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Perry, Kirsten. "Don't Assume That Every Student Had a Fun or Warm Holiday Break." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, 29 Dec. 2017, https://www.pbs.org/newshour/education/dont-assume-that-every-student-had-a-fun-or-warm-holiday-break.

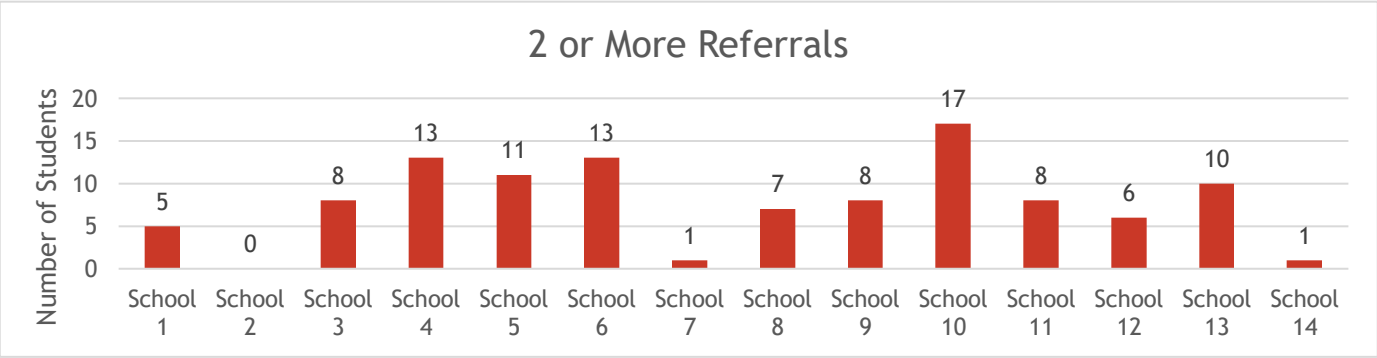
Muir, T. (2018, December 13). Winter Break Is Hard for So Many of Our Students. Retrieved from https://www.weareteachers.com/supporting-students-winter-break/.

If you have questions or I can be of assistance please don't hesitate to call or email.

Tina Johnson
Academic and Behavior Coordinator
352-3400 ext. 1240

District SWIS Data and Holiday Stress

The following graph shares the number of students per school, with two or more minor and/or major discipline referrals from November 1st through the morning of November 26th. It is important to consider that these students might be manifesting the effects of holiday stress.



The holiday season is a time of joy and cheer for most of us. However, for many of our students and their families, the holidays can also be a time of high anxiety and tension. Many students dread any break from school. They miss the structure of the school day, the stability of the classroom, the presence of friends, the food in the cafeteria, and the love their teachers give them. Although we cannot change our students' home circumstances, there are ways we can support our students in the weeks leading up to and during extended breaks. The following is divided into two sections one aimed at the classroom and the second at students

Guidance for the Classroom

- Don't build anticipation. Assemblies, presentations, and other holiday events are unavoidable in December, but you can prevent your class from getting over-excited by staying focused on daily routines instead of special activities.
- Resist the urge to ease up on your behavioral expectations. Believe me when I say that easing up will backfire completely. When the teacher is lackadaisical, it just adds to the environment of chaos that the students are slowly creating and makes it harder to get the class back on track.
- **Review your procedures and expectations.** It's probably been a few weeks or months since you've articulated and modeled some of your classroom procedures for the entire class. (Just because you tell the same four kids over and over that NO, they cannot get a drink in the middle of a lesson, does not mean the rest of the class was paying attention when you reiterated your expectations.)
- Integrate high-interest projects and group work into your regular routines. Activities should be interesting enough to keep the kids focused on their work, and incorporate plenty of movement. The idea is that the kids don't notice a change in the way the day is run; only you as the teacher are aware of the subtle differences in the way content is presented and activities assigned.
- Don't feel pressure to do all of the elaborate holiday stuff that other teachers do. So what if the teacher across the hall covers her room in tinsel and lights and creates extensive holiday-themed centers which culminate in a life-size replica of the first North Pole expedition? Don't compare yourself, and don't wear yourself out trying to keep up. New teachers, especially, need to resist the urge to take on more than they can handle. Figure out some simple festive things you can do that won't create a lot of stress, and stick with those.
- Keep the last day before break low-key. Three hours before you pack up your whole family and make an eight hour trip to grandma's house is NOT the time to plan an elaborate fraction-review-gingerbread-house-decorating activity. Instead, give meaningful work assignments that the kids will enjoy completing, and enjoy the last day together.
- Get prepared for January before you leave. Try to use the day before break to take down any seasonal decorations you have up, change the calendar, finalize your lesson plans and materials for the first day back, etc.

Support for the Student

If you notice students are acting out more than normal, see if you can detect the cause. Are they upset because everyone else is talking about holiday traditions and they don't have any? Has someone in their family passed away or recently gotten sick? Are they not living with their parents right now and don't know how they'll be celebrating the holidays? Is the holiday season upsetting their schedule and making them cranky?

- Be a listening ear. This time of year, more than any other except maybe summer break, is when students act out the most. As educators, we can pay close attention to behavior that is out of character and check in with those students individually. Have a conversation with that student who is more hyper than usual. Ask that student who keeps falling asleep how they're *really* doing. Give

those kids a chance to vent and then let them know you care about them. One of the best things teachers can do for their students during this season (and all other times of the year) is listen.

- Connect students with resources when possible. There are so many coat, toy, and food drives happening during the holiday season, but students may need someone to connect them with these efforts. If you're concerned about a student's food security or lack of winter gear or presents, speak with your school's guidance counselor about opportunities that might already be happening in your school or community.
- Give students an opportunity to serve. No matter what one's circumstances are, everyone has the ability to serve others. And for most, the act of giving brings joy in return. How can your class serve together this holiday season? Could you perform acts of kindness for one another or write thank-you letters to military members stationed overseas?
- Giveaways: Host giveaways for food, coats, blankets or gifts that can be provided to students and families
- Refrain from giving assignments *about* the break (before or after): We cannot assume that all students will have had a pleasant experience over the break; such assignments may make students upset or embarrassed in front of their peers.
- Be aware of how you talk about winter break. Asking questions to the whole class like, "Who's excited for break?" and "What are you going to get for Christmas/Hanukkah?" doesn't apply to all students. Maybe instead ask, "What are your plans for the break?" or even challenge them with, "What is one way you can help someone in the next couple of weeks?"

Enjoy this season and all the festivities that come with it. Just keep in mind that some students due to stress, anxiety, grief, or sadness may not look forward to the season or the time away from school.

Eight Characteristics of an Effective Academic Intervention

Extensive evidence validates that Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention instruction can effectively close the achievement gap for struggling students. However, for intervention in instruction to be effective the following essential characteristics must be in place.

1. Targeted on One Skill

Intervention (flex or WIN groups) must be focused to be effective. Focusing on one **little itty bitty** skill during a lesson allows the student the opportunity to master the skill. You will not teach 2 digit addition without regrouping and two digit addition with regrouping at the same time. The focus will be narrow but instruction intense. Intervention time can be specifically focused die to the fact that other skills are still being taught during core Tier 1 instruction.

2. Skills Taught in a Sequence

Core instructional skills occur in a sequence. Intervention groups must reflect the instructional sequence of the skill being addressed. Students must be placed in intervention groups based on where in the sequence they are ready to learn at that particular moment. A form of diagnostic assessment should be utilized to confirm a student has mastered the prerequisites to the skill being taught in the intervention group. Sequential instruction allows students to move along their own personal continuums and ensures they have "perfect practice"

3. Explicit Instruction

Explicit can be explained as the instructor telling a student directly, as opposed to expecting they will infer a concept from the lesson being taught. Teachers often use the "I do, we do, you do" model of teaching. For the "I do" component to be explicit, the teacher must explain **and**/or demonstrate each instructional step out loud. Explicit instructing during the "you do" segment would include immediate

individualized feedback. This feedback can only be provided if the student is completing the learning task in front of the teacher **not** independently at their desks.

4. Systematic Instruction

Systematic instruction includes following a consistent procedure or cuing the student in the same way each time. Asking questions in the same way each time has the benefit of lowering the cognitive load required by the student. In addition, it allows the student to devote all of their attention to solving the task as opposed to think about what was being asked.

5. Multisensory Techniques

Manipulatives are often considered "primary" however, they are beneficial in all Tier 2 or Tier 3 settings. Manipulatives make abstract concepts more concrete. A student can utilize both visual and auditory cues to learn/perform a skill.

6. Feedback Loops

One of the most significant characteristics of effective instruction is immediate and specific student feedback. In a small group setting, when a student makes a mistake a teacher is able to provide immediate correction through modeling and/re-explaining the lesson element. There is no delay in feedback. This component is referred to as a feedback loop because the cycle "I do, we do, you do" with immediate feedback continues until the student has mastered the concept.

7. Minimal Teacher Talk

Teachers do too much talking. In some classrooms teacher talk 90% of the time as opposed to students 10%. For the most compelling student results teachers should use a minimum amount of words and then listen to the students to determine if they need more explanation/instruction. Increase student "air time."

8. Instructional Routines

Instructional routines reduce the amount of cognitive energy students have to devote to remembering instructions. When the routine remains consistent, a students' attention can focus on mastering the current concept rather than the instructions.

PBIS/SWIS To Dos and How Tos

- Our district has committed to utilizing SWIS to monitor student behavior. Enter all behavior referrals into SWIS this including minors and truancies.
- December 20th will be the end of the first quarter. It is a district expectation that SWIS data be shared at a minimum once a quarter. Tina S. and I would be happy to assist with completing building or PLC level drill downs.
- Update IEP information in SWIS. If a student is/is not on an IEP it should be correctly marked in SWIS. A secretary or data entry individual cannot do this without administrative assistance. They do not have access to SEAS.
- It is important that we ensure our student and staff are entered **accurately** into SWIS. Please pass this email on to the individual that completes your data entry. If your data entry person does not know how to make corrections have them email Tina S. or myself. Secretaries have the ability to download the necessary information from PowerSchool. This information can then be cross checked with SWIS under the Person Management Tab.
    - Check the **spelling** of student names prior to entering them into the system. Please use their "real" name as it is spelled in PowerSchool
    - Students who have moved and have the opportunity to return to your school should be marked inactive. Please don't just leave them sitting in the system as active.
    - Students who have graduated to a new school 5-6, 7-8, 9-12 or graduated should be **archived**. They do not have the opportunity to return to your school.
    - Students should be entered under their **WISER ID** and **not** their School ID.
    - Staff should be entered under the number that is listed on their **badge**.

PBIS/SWIS upcoming events

- Third AMP training will be held January 7th from 1:00 to 4:00 in the CAB Boardroom.