Ohio's Commitment to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

OFFICE OF WHOLE CHILD SUPPORTS

Ohio | Department of Education

Ohio's Commitment to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports 2020-2021

Ohio's strategic plan for education, *Each Child, Our Future,* highlights the need for a positive climate in every school to support students' well-being, academic achievement and future success. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) creates a consistent, safe and positive school climate. PBIS is a framework that provides support to students, families and educators' health and safety, social and emotional needs and behavioral and academic growth. The framework also helps support students by focusing on their strengths and building on their confidence to succeed. PBIS is a research-based system that utilizes a positive approach to discipline, which leads to a reduction in office referrals, in-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions that decrease instructional time for students.

The Ohio Department of Education is required by law[1] to submit a report to the Ohio General Assembly that includes the following:
1. A summary of the best practices for implementing a PBIS framework by school districts throughout Ohio; and
2. The total number of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions issued by a school district or building to students in prekindergarten through grade 3, disaggregated by category of offense and disaggregated within each offense by sex, race, economic disadvantage and disability.

Ohio law supports expanding PBIS systemwide by providing a training requirement for all student personnel. Governor Kasich signed House Bill 318 in August 2018, with an effective date of Nov. 2, 2018, to address multi-tiered behavioral supports to reduce out-of-school suspension and expulsions, especially for prekindergarten through grade 3 students. District implementation of PBIS now is a non-graded reported card measure on Ohio School Report Cards. Ohio law requires each school district to implement a PBIS framework for all of schools in the district. Each district's local professional development committee is required to monitor the training of staff obligated to complete the PBIS training by Nov. 2, 2021, three years from the effective date of the bill.

Additionally, Ohio's legislation supports using PBIS to establish a safe environment and reduce the need for restraint and seclusion. On April 9, 2013, the State Board of Education approved Ohio Administrative Code 3301-35-15, standards for the implementation of PBIS and the use of restraint and seclusion. To enhance Ohio's commitment to using PBIS to support students, the rule was revised and re-approved on June 24, 2021. The revised rule ensures Ohio school districts establish consistent policies and procedures for the use of PBIS and emergency restraint and seclusion. This creates safe environments for students and staff and reduces the need for emergency physical restraint and seclusion through behavioral supports and training.

This annual report highlights Ohio's robust PBIS initiative and provides information about best practices from award-winning schools and districts across the state.

WHAT IS PBIS?
PBIS is a framework that guides districts and schools in developing policies and practices that proactively define, teach and support appropriate student behavior. PBIS creates consistent, predictable learning environments that increase positive behavior and academic outcomes for each student by teaching behavioral expectations across all environments (from the bus to the classroom and in the hallways to the lunchroom). Schools effectively implementing PBIS promote positive behavior through encouragement and reinforcement

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[1] Section 9, HB 318, 132nd General Assembly

and provide correction of inappropriate behavior through prompting, reteaching and opportunities for behavior correction.

PBIS BEST PRACTICES FROM OHIO'S SCHOOLS
Ohio has a longstanding PBIS Network. Guided by the Department's Office of Whole Child Supports, the Ohio PBIS Network develops training and coaching materials and provides guidance and resources to support the scaling up of PBIS in Ohio schools.

The Ohio PBIS Network identified nine best practices, included below, for the effective implementation of PBIS. These nine best practices are based on best practices identified by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Program's Technical Assistance Center on PBIS and elements of the Tiered Fidelity Inventory, an assessment measuring the extent to which school teams apply the core features of PBIS.

PBIS BEST PRACTICES
1. Consistent administrative leadership and involvement guide the necessary cultural shift and systemwide efforts for successful implementation of PBIS.
2. Team-based structures, such as building-level teams and district-level teams, are in place to ensure implementation of practices. These teams assess, problem-solve and plan for the implementation of PBIS.
3. Each school district (or building) identifies three to five positively stated behavioral expectations, such as being safe, respectful and responsible.
4. The three to five behavioral expectations are taught explicitly in settings across the school environment, including the classroom, hallway, cafeteria and restroom. Lesson plans are created and employed throughout the school year.
5. Districts and schools develop systems to consistently acknowledge and reinforce students who demonstrate the behavior expectations. Well-developed acknowledgment systems are tailored to the developmental levels of the students, are constructed to minimize the use of tangible rewards and promote student responsibility and motivation.
6. Districts and schools establish consistent systems for the correction of behavior errors. This includes clear policies and procedures for addressing classroom-managed behaviors and office-managed behaviors (minor vs. major behaviors).
7. PBIS teams consistently collect and analyze data for problem-solving and decision-making. The data is collected at the schoolwide, small-group and individual student levels and reviewed at least monthly.
8. A multi-tiered system of supports is available to meet the varying needs of students. All students receive core instruction and reinforcement of the schoolwide behavioral expectations (Tier I). Small-group instruction and additional social or academic skill practice is provided as supplemental supports for some students (Tier II). Individualized assessment, intervention plans and wraparound services are provided for students who need comprehensive supports (Tier III).
9. Practices are implemented in a culturally responsive manner that honor and reference the varied cultural backgrounds of the students. Staff receive training and ongoing professional development to promote cultural awareness and sensitivity. Staff periodically review discipline data and address any disproportionality patterns. Students and families are actively engaged in the planning and implementation process.

CELEBRATING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS IN OHIO

Each year, the Ohio Department of Education and the PBIS Network recognize schools and districts for their quality and fidelity of PBIS implementation through a statewide recognition system. Schools can earn recognition at the bronze, silver or gold levels. Ohio schools and districts apply to their regional state support teams for this recognition and awards are announced each fall. The schools receive certificates of award, are

recognized at the annual statewide PBIS Showcase Conference and are encouraged to present their work at the showcase to teach other schools and districts about their practices.

In 2015, the PBIS Recognition System began and distributed 21 awards. In 2021, a total of 355 schools and districts received recognition. Award recipients include 34 gold awards, 72 silver awards, 232 bronze awards and 17 district awards. Many of these award winners opened their doors to neighboring districts wishing to observe exemplar PBIS practices. A list of PBIS award winners can be found on the Department's PBIS Recognition, Visitation and Showcase webpage. The next section of this report shares best practices from select award-winning districts.

BEST PRACTICES IN OHIO'S DISTRICTS

Cincinnati Public School District Pilots District Systems Fidelity Inventory

Cincinnati Public School District's mission is to support the implementation of an evidence-based PBIS framework that addresses the whole child, promotes safety and fosters academic achievement for every student. This is accomplished through a clear, collaborative plan that guides faculty, staff and families in developing positive, culturally responsive supports and proactive strategies for students. The district leadership team is comprised of a representative blend of administrators, teachers, educational support personnel (school psychologists, social workers and counselors), State Support Team 13 staff and community partners. Through monthly meetings, this team administered the District Systems Fidelity Inventory which serves as a guide for action planning, progress monitoring and ongoing evaluation of the fidelity of PBIS implementation and impact through data-based decision making.

In 2020-2021, all of the district's 65 schools submitted goals and action steps and conducted the Tiered Fidelity Inventory for Tier I. Tier I practices and interventions are universal and delivered to all students, such as schoolwide behavioral expectations. In 2021-2022, the district will support schools as they begin to rate themselves on Tiers I and II of the Tiered Fidelity Inventory. Tier II practices and interventions are targeted to select students, such as small-group social-skill instruction and mentoring. Additionally, the district PBIS team facilitates biannual PBIS work sessions for building-level teams. The focus of these professional development sessions is to help building-level teams understand the connection between their ratings on the Tiered Fidelity Inventory and their PBIS action planning. Teams have also worked on "going deeper" in their PBIS work through the utilization of the PBIS Cultural Responsiveness Field Guide. Last spring, the district shared district-level, aggregate Tiered Fidelity Inventory data, highlighting the areas of strength and need. Through a problem-solving approach, the PBIS framework begins with examining the areas of strength and need and improve the entire school climate, school safety and school discipline. Teams use data to examine the reasons behaviors are occurring and implement changes and interventions designed to address the identified needs. Teams have overwhelmingly responded positively to the practical guidance and increased understanding of the connection between the Tiered Fidelity Inventory and PBIS plan and their ability to determine if the interventions are effective or need adjustments to meet students' needs.

Columbus City Schools is Building District Capacity

Columbus City School District is a large urban district with a total of 110 Schools (19 high schools,19 middle schools and 72 elementary schools). Over the years, Columbus has added six district PBIS coordinators which has allowed greater support to all schools and the district. Each district PBIS coordinator provides support to a single region with approximately 18-22 schools. District PBIS coordinators support their regions by attending and participating in building-level meetings and core team meetings with regional superintendents, providing technical support and district-level professional development for school-level PBIS and intervention assistance team coordinators and serve on the district Multi-Tiered Systems of Support advisory committee. Each Friday, district PBIS coordinators offer quick tips on PBIS and social-emotional learning titled "PBIS Friday LIVE!" for

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15 minutes virtually to support all district staff. Additionally, coordinators create a monthly PBIS newsletter centered around best practices and share with all staff.

The district has focused on creating districtwide PBIS systems and structures to facilitate high-fidelity PBIS implementation. Each spring, staff complete the Tiered Fidelity Inventory to enable better data collection. To maintain Tiered Fidelity Inventory and PBIS fidelity, district PBIS coordinators conduct Tiered Fidelity walkthroughs for all schools to use as evidence for Tier I PBIS implementation. The Tiered Fidelity Inventory score is incorporated into each school's improvement plan with features of the Tiered Fidelity Inventory noted as adult measurement to support culture and climate school improvement goals.

As a result of increasing district coordinator support, creating strong district systems and structures and intentional professional development, the district has increased the number of schools receiving state PBIS recognition. In 2019-2020, the district received 35 total awards. In 2020-2021, the district received 45 total awards (35 bronze, five silver and five gold). The district also was awarded district PBIS state recognition in 2020 and 2021.

Forest Hills Local Pivots for the Pandemic

Forest Hills Local School District adapted the PBIS framework to work in the virtual classroom during remote learning to meet the needs of students, families and staff during the pandemic. The district school psychologist workgroup created a multi-tiered systems of support framework outlining strategies for remote education at the Tier I, II and III levels. Tier III practices and interventions are intensive and individualized, such as counseling and wraparound services. This framework was shared with building multi-tiered systems of support teams to support them in modifying PBIS practices. The workgroup also created an infographic for teachers and building teams outlining tiered strategies for students at the district's virtual academy. Knowing that some students may be more impacted by the pandemic, the workgroup created a document outlining community-based wraparound services which was shared with all district psychologists to support students needing Tier III social, emotional and behavioral supports. District counselors created a wellness resources document and distributed it to parents to help make parents aware of community resources.

Schools modified their PBIS expectation matrices for remote learning and taught students the new expectations. A staggered start with half of the student population at the beginning of the school year helped to teach these expectations in smaller groups. Schools disseminated information to parents to implement PBIS expectations at home during remote learning and some schools offered the use of an acknowledgment system that provides immediate, intermittent or long-term rewards to recognize and encourage students for engaging in positive behavior. Positive acknowledgments and office referrals were changed to virtual formats rather than paper.

The district achieved recognition in eight out of nine buildings in 2020-2021 for adapting the PBIS framework to meet the needs of students, families and staff due to the pandemic and creating a multi-tiered system of supports framework outlining strategies at the Tier I, II and III levels. The district also received six bronze awards and two gold awards.

Vandalia-Butler Expands to Preschool and District Implementation

Vandalia-Butler City School District has been implementing the PBIS framework for seven years and continues to expand. This year, the school district is implementing PBIS at the preschool level, focusing on students as young as three years old. All schools in the district focus on the same three pillars: respectful, responsible and resourceful. All schools have been recognized by the PBIS Network for implementation with fidelity for the last two years, leading to the district being recognized as one of only 17 districts of distinction during the 2020-2021

school year.

The district-level team participated with the Office of Whole Child Supports to pilot the District Systems Fidelity Inventory as part of cohort one during the 2020-2021 school year. The district is continuing this pilot for school year 2021-2022. The district has taken numerous action steps toward making progress on the District Systems Fidelity Inventory goals. Key district aspects include the use of data to make informed decisions and consistent expectations from prekindergarten through grade 12. The district is developing an organizational chart to document the authority of personnel to make key decisions. Multiple schools in the district have moved primary leadership of the PBIS program away from the building administrator to other staff members to ensure ownership and continuity of the framework. The District Systems Fidelity Inventory accelerated discussions about the development of an exclusive PBIS budget line. Dedicated funding, combined with the development of a District Committee Handbook, will help the committee rise to the expectations of Resource Alignment in the District Systems Fidelity Inventory. The PBIS team approached their Human Resources Department to suggest questions targeting PBIS during the interview process. One school in the district is planning to pilot the use of a Schoolwide Information System during the second semester of school year to determine if it may be an effective whole-district behavior collection tool.

ELIMINATING OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS FOR OHIO'S YOUNGEST LEARNERS

Ohio districts, community schools, STEM or STEAM schools[2] and college preparatory boarding schools established under chapter 3328 of the Ohio Revised Code are expected to gradually decrease suspensions as follows:

School Year	Percent of Out-of-School Suspension/Expulsion Reductions
2018-2019	0% reduction
2019-2020	25% reduction
2020-2021	50% reduction
2021-2022	100% reduction

School districts and community schools received their 2020-2021 out-of-school suspension and expulsion data for students in prekindergarten through grade 3 in a separate communication from the Department and reduction will be monitored accordingly. The reduction and elimination requirements do not include out-of-school suspensions or expulsions related to circumstances that pose significant danger to school and student safety. Districts and schools are not required to reduce or eliminate out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for the following reasons:

- Bringing a firearm to a school or on any other district property;[3]
- Bringing a firearm to an interscholastic competition, extracurricular event or any other school program or activity that is not on the district's property;[4]
- Bringing a knife capable of causing serious bodily injury to a school or other school property, interscholastic competition, extracurricular event, or other program or activity sponsored by the school or in which the district is participating;[5]

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[2] Section 9, HB 318.
[3] ORC 3313.66(B)(2)(a)
[4] ORC 3313.66(B)(2)(b)
[5] ORC 3313.66(B)(3)

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- Possessing a firearm or knife capable of serious bodily injury (including any initially brought on school property by another person) at a school or other district property, interscholastic competition, extracurricular event, or any other school program or activity;[6]
- Committing an act that is a criminal offense when committed by an adult and that results in serious physical harm to persons or property while the student is at school, on other district property, or at an interscholastic competition, extracurricular event, or any other school program or activity;[7]
- Making a bomb threat to a school building or any premises at which a school activity is occurring at the time of the threat.[8]

Out-of-school suspension and expulsion data for prekindergarten through grade 3 students in public school districts and community schools for the 2020-2021 school year can be found on the Department's webpage. The data are disaggregated by category of offense and further disaggregated by sex, race, whether the student has been identified as economically disadvantaged and whether the student has a disability.

These statistics are calculated using data reported in the Education Management Information System (EMIS) by districts and community schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The numbers provided represent the number of discipline *incidents* and do not represent the actual *number* of students who were suspended out of school or expelled in prekindergarten through grade 3. Any school district or community school with numbers in any offense category or disaggregated category made up of fewer than 10 students will be displayed as <10 in the associated spreadsheet. The data are disaggregated by category of offense:

1. **Immediate Health and Safety Exemptions** – A prekindergarten through grade 3 student was issued an out-of-school suspension or expulsion at the discretion of the district or community school necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, student's fellow classmates, classroom staff or teachers or other school employees.
2. **Out-of-school Suspensions and Expulsions Without Exemptions** – A prekindergarten through grade 3 student was issued an out-of-school suspension or expulsion by the district or community school, but the offense was not listed as an exemption in Ohio Revised Code. This category of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions must be gradually eliminated by the 2021-2022 school year.
3. **Ohio Revised Code 3313.66 Exemptions** – A prekindergarten through grade 3 student was issued an out-of-school suspension or expulsion for an offense the Ohio General Assembly identified as a necessary reason for suspension and expulsion listed above.
4. **Data Reporting Error** – This category represents out-of-school suspensions or expulsions of prekindergarten through grade 3 students that were not coded in EMIS as any of the above categories.

Discipline Reason	Statewide PK-3 Offense Count for 2020-2021	Statewide PK-3 Offense Count for 2019-2020
A prekindergarten through grade 3 student was issued an out-of-school suspension or expulsion at the discretion of the district or community school necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student, student's fellow classmates, classroom staff or teachers, or other school employees.	1,423	6,687

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[6] ORC 3313.66(B)(3)

[7] ORC 3313.66(B)(4)

[8] ORC 3313.66(B)(5)

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A prekindergarten through grade 3 student was issued an out-of-school suspension or expulsion by the district or community school, but the offense was not listed as an exemption in Ohio Revised Code. This category of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions must be gradually eliminated by the 2021-2022 school year.	574	3,827
A prekindergarten through grade 3 student was issued an out-of-school suspension or expulsion for an offense included in the ORC 3313.66 (B)(2)-(5) exemptions, as he or she posed significant danger to school and student safety.	344	2,004
Data Reporting Error: An out-of-school suspension or expulsion of a prekindergarten through grade 3 student was not coded in EMIS as any of the categories above.	80	752
Statewide Total for prekindergarten through grade 3 out-of-school suspensions and expulsions	2,421	13,270

Ohio districts and community schools issued 2,421 out-of-school suspensions and expulsions to prekindergarten through grade 3 students in the 2020-2021 school year. Of these 2,421 out-of-school suspensions and expulsions, 1,767 were incidents determined to be a significant risk to student and school safety or the immediate health and safety of students and staff. These 1,767 out-of-school suspensions and expulsions are included in Ohio Revised Code exemptions. However, 574 out-of-school suspensions and expulsions were issued to prekindergarten through grade 3 students for out-of-school suspensions and expulsions without exemptions. Out-of-school suspensions and expulsions in this category must be reduced and ultimately eliminated by 2021-2022.[9] The number of students in prekindergarten through grade 3 who were suspended or expelled out of school may be lower than a typical year because of students learning in a remote environment due to COVID-19.

PBIS: AN EFFECTIVE STRATEGY FOR REDUCING SUSPENSIONS
Ohio schools implementing PBIS with fidelity have demonstrated noteworthy reductions in their rates of in-school and out-of-school suspensions. With these reductions, administrators and teachers have more time to focus on academic progress. Students previously removed from the academic environment now spend more time receiving instruction. Further, decreased behavior distractions in the classroom lead to an increase in academic instruction time for other students in the classroom.
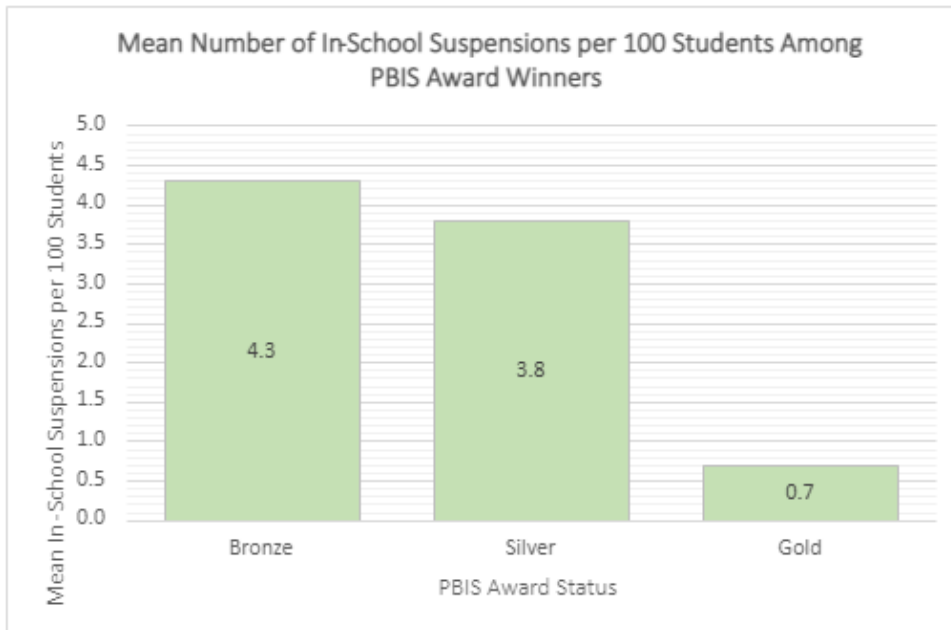
The graphs below represent schools and districts recognized for implementing PBIS with a high degree of fidelity in the 2020-2021 academic year. Award winners received gold, silver or bronze awards depending on the following criteria:
- Bronze (Developing) level schools exhibit a comprehensive system of behavioral supports at Tier I with a Tiered Fidelity Inventory score of at least 70%.
- Silver (Proficient) level schools must meet all the criteria of Bronze level schools and implement with a higher level of fidelity. These schools also implement Tier II supports with a Tiered Fidelity Inventory score of at least 70%.
- Gold (Accomplished) level schools must meet all the criteria of Bronze and Silver level schools and implement with the highest level of fidelity. These schools maintain Tier II and Tier III supports with Tiered Fidelity Inventory scores of at least 70% at each tier. Gold level schools provide well-established systems to provide Functional Behavioral Assessments, Behavioral Intervention Plans and interagency collaboration to meet the needs of all students.
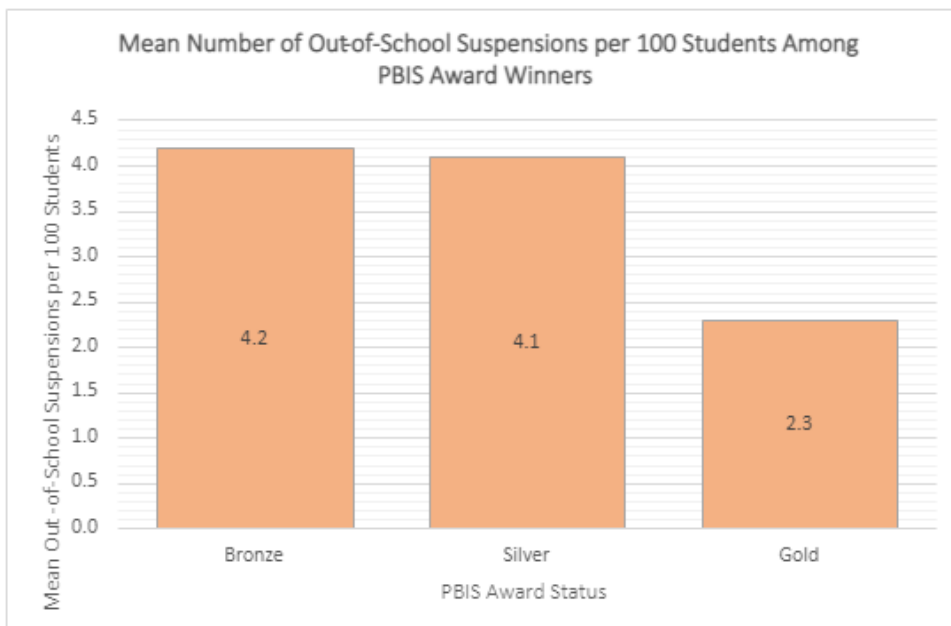
[9] Section 9, HB 318

The graphs below show the mean number of in-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions for 2020-2021 among PBIS award winners.

In-School Suspensions

Out-of-School Suspensions

Overall, the data show that with greater fidelity of implementation, the lower the mean number of suspensions. Award winners at the gold level had the lowest mean number of in-school and out-of-school suspensions. The decline of in-school suspensions from bronze (4.3) to silver (3.8) to gold (0.7) is most

notable. Gold level award winners experienced the far fewer out-of-school suspensions (2.3) compared to bronze (4.2) and silver (4.1) award winners.

The 132nd General Assembly of the Ohio Legislature points to PBIS as a support to schools and districts to reduce and eventually eliminate out-of-school suspensions and expulsions for students in prekindergarten through grade 3. With more training opportunities and supports to implement PBIS, schools and districts are expected to eliminate out-of-school suspensions and expulsions by the 2021-2022 school year.[10]
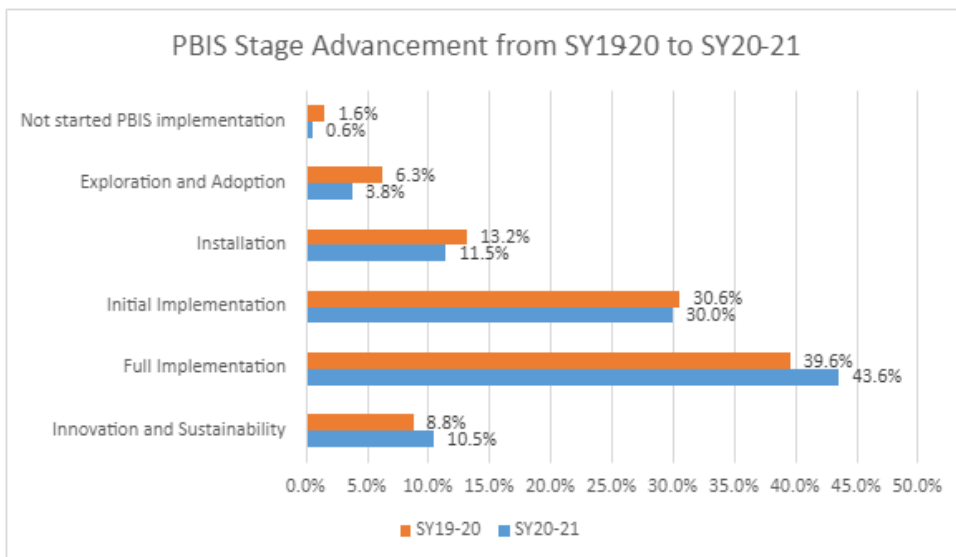
EXPANDING PBIS

Advancing Statewide Implementation

PBIS implementation is expanding across the state. Ohio schools are required to self-report their PBIS implementation based on six levels in the Education Management Information System (EMIS). EMIS is a statewide data-collection system for Ohio's primary and secondary education.
- The first level is described as not having yet started PBIS.
- The next level, Exploration and Adoption, is described as researching PBIS, exploring readiness and securing staff and administration agreement to implement PBIS.
- Installation is described as creating the PBIS team, completing PBIS training and establishing initial systems, data-decisions, policies and practices that will be required to implement PBIS.
- Initial Implementation is described as rolling out and implementing PBIS schoolwide, with a focus on Tier I supports.
- Full Implementation is described as implementing PBIS with all systemic components and a range of interventions (Tier I, II and III supports).
- Innovation and Sustainability is described as routinely checking fidelity and outcomes of implementation using national assessments and revising practices and systems as needed.

The graph below shows the PBIS implementation levels of Ohio schools from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021.

PBIS Stage Advancement from SY1920 to SY20-21

Level	SY19-20	SY20-21
Not started PBIS implementation	1.6%	0.6%
Exploration and Adoption	6.3%	3.8%
Installation	13.2%	11.5%
Initial Implementation	30.6%	30.0%
Full Implementation	39.6%	43.6%
Innovation and Sustainability	8.8%	10.5%

From 2019-2020 to 2020-2021, more schools moved into the Full Implementation and Innovation and Sustainability levels. Fewer schools fell into the four lower levels of implementation in 2020-2021 than 2019-

Section 9, HB 318

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2020. In 2022-2023, districts must report Full Implementation or higher to receive a "yes" on the report card unless the school or district is new or has a new IRN. This process allows schools and districts to start and implement PBIS with fidelity and receive a "yes" on the report card.

Building Statewide Capacity through the School Climate Transformation Grant

PBIS is a core component of *Each Child, Our Future,* Strategy 7, to meet the needs of the whole child. PBIS is an evidence-based, tiered framework and systems change process that requires ongoing training and coaching. In 2018, Ohio was awarded its second round of a five-year School Climate Transformation Grant by the U.S. Department of Education to expand PBIS training and coaching throughout Ohio. The Department is focusing on these five goals through 2023 to achieve this expansion:

- Goal 1: Build Ohio Department of Education and state-level capacity;
- Goal 2: Enhance local district and school capacity to implement PBIS;
- Goal 3: Improve coordination of state department efforts with appropriate federal, state and local resources;
- Goal 4: Incorporate opioid abuse prevention and mitigation strategies (including trauma-informed practices) into the PBIS framework; and
- Goal 5: Complement the state's existing efforts to address disproportionate rates of discipline and restraint and seclusion by increasing integration of culturally responsive practices into PBIS implementation.

The Department hired state and regional positions to support the expansion of PBIS training and coaching using School Climate Transformation Grant funding. Staff in these regional positions conducted needs assessments and developed training and coaching plans for each project area. The plans are designed to increase PBIS training and coaching capacity within state support teams and educational service centers to expand PBIS training and coaching for schools and districts.

The Department worked with the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence to create a new set of video modules to support the expansion of PBIS. These modules include information on best practices across the state for using data, the Tiered Fidelity Inventory and supporting the needs of the whole child. These videos will be available for educators on the Department's learning management system in early 2022.

The Department is also working to support schools and districts with aligning and integrating PBIS with other initiatives, such as prevention strategies, trauma-informed practices, culturally responsive practices and social and emotional learning. When these strategies are incorporated into the PBIS framework, the needs of the whole child truly can be addressed.

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