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House Bill 1340

FACT SHEET, 2011

ENSURE TEXAS TEACHERS HAVE ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TOOLS

PROBLEM

Many Texas school districts – facing tremendous cuts to resources, as well as increased burdens through higher student-to-teacher class ratios and growing populations of at-risk students – lack access to training on effective classroom management tools, such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Without the ability to implement recognized best practices for classroom management, teachers and administrators may rely more heavily on the use of campus police to handle discipline issues as they arise. Such reliance on law enforcement can increase costs to communities through an increased burden on the juvenile and criminal justice systems, often for minor behavior problems, while harming families and creating life-long penalties for children who could have benefited from earlier interventions.

KEY FINDINGS ABOUT POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

PBIS is an already existing and approved disciplinary framework shown to prevent problem behaviors by students in the classroom, including those with mental or behavioral health issues, through the utilization of interventions and rewards. It is promoted by both the Texas Education Agency and U.S. Department of Education, and it represents an effective alternative to the over-utilized practice of ticketing students for routine misbehavior.

More specifically, PBIS is not a curriculum, intervention, or practice, but rather a decision-making guide for a school's selection, integration, and implementation of a continuum of evidence-based practices aimed at improving students' learning and behavior. Instead of waiting for inappropriate behavior to occur before intervening, **PBIS facilitates the establishment of a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm, by teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them.** Students who do not respond to prevention interventions receive more targeted interventions based on their individual needs, in a graduated, multi-tiered process.

Schools that have implemented PBIS report the following:

- Fewer disciplinary actions
- Improved sense of safety at school
- Increased academic performance
- Increased attendance
- Decreased referral of students to special education

H.B. 1340 BENEFITS

- **H.B. 1340 establishes a diverse Leadership Team – composed of PBIS experts, school representatives, child-serving agencies, parents, and others – who are tasked with creating a public input-based statewide plan for aligning and coordinating programs and resources to support schools interested in implementing PBIS.** There is no “one-size-fits-all” way to implement PBIS; schools can consider their unique community and implement PBIS to best address their needs. While some schools choose to seek additional funds to support their PBIS efforts, most can implement PBIS for minimal or no additional money. This bill helps schools give teachers and administrators more time to spend on student learning rather than addressing discipline or bullying problems, thereby improving academic outcomes for all children.

- **H.B. 1340** requires the **PBIS Leadership Team** to submit a report during each even-numbered year to the **Council on Children and Families regarding the progress of the statewide plan**. After implementing the plan, the Team is required to make recommendations in a report to the Legislature and the Governor on the continuation, discontinuation, and/or reorganization of the Team.

Note: H.B. 1340 does not mandate PBIS; it assists districts that want to implement PBIS.

SOLUTION: SUPPORT H.B. 1340 BY REPRESENTATIVE WALLE

H.B. 1340 facilitates the effective and sustained incorporation of a well-recognized framework of positive behavior supports, which can serve as a tool for Texas school administrators and educators seeking to establish clear, school-wide expectations about appropriate student behavior. H.B. 1340, through this framework, supports school staff in modeling and reinforcing those norms, while furthering the effective use of classroom time on educating students.