



INTRODUCTION

A unique phenomenon associated with well-established and widely-implemented educational initiatives is the potential for districts and schools to re-implement practices they have formerly abandoned.

Schools and districts often abandon effective initiatives due to factors such as, changes in leadership, lack of staff commitment, or competing initiatives required by educational agencies or states.

SWPBIS is three-tiered, systems-level approach focused on building safe, predictable school environments where all staff and students share a common understanding of behavioral expectations (Sugai & Horner, 2009).

Although previous implementation research has examined factors associated with sustained implementation and abandonment of SWPBIS, no studies have examined factors that lead to the successful readoption of SWPBIS practices.

This study examined the following research questions:

- 1. What critical features were schools most likely to abandon?
2. What were the perceived reasons schools abandoned SWPBIS?
3. What were the perceived reasons schools readopted SWPBIS?

METHOD

Sample: 23 school personnel who worked in 30 schools. Most were in schools that abandoned SWPBIS for less than one year (n = 16, 53%), 11 (37%) abandoned for 1-2 years, two (7%) abandoned for 3-4 years, and one (3%) abandoned for 5 or more years. Schools were located in eight states.

Measure: 9-item survey used to identify factors that impacted decisions to abandon and later readopt SWPBIS.

Procedures: Participants were recruited in their fourth year (2015-16), as part of a larger longitudinal study (n = 330) that examined factors predictive of sustained use of SWPBIS (McIntosh et al., 2013).

Analysis: Mixed-methods approach was used to analyze closed and open-ended responses. Descriptive statistics were used for closed-ended items and an open coding process (Patton, 2002) was used for the 78 open-ended responses. For inter-rater agreement (IRA) for utilization, the third author randomly selected and coded 18/78 (23%) responses. Agreement between the authors was 90%. After discussing disagreements, agreement was 100%.

112 units were identified from the open-ended responses. The first author examined units and identified common themes, developed, and revised a coding dictionary (Table 1). A minimum of two units (3%) were necessary to represent a unique theme (Patton, 2002).

IRA on thematic coding (26; 23%) was 77%. Authors then discussed disagreements and revised the coding dictionary. Following another round of coding, agreement was 90%. Disagreements were discussed until agreement was 100%.

RESULTS

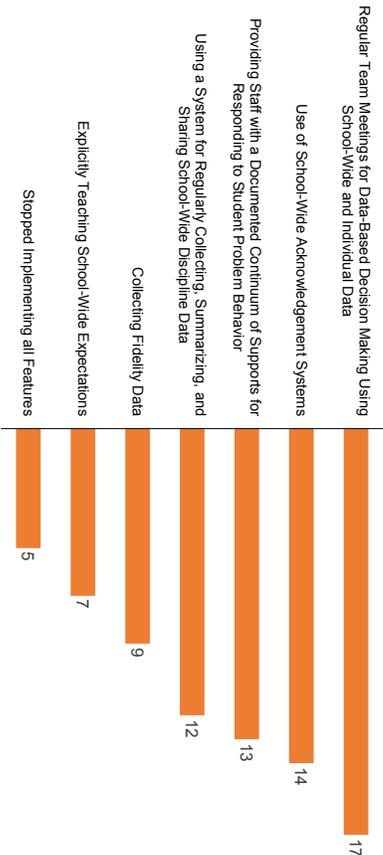


Figure 1. Critical SWPBIS Features Abandoned.

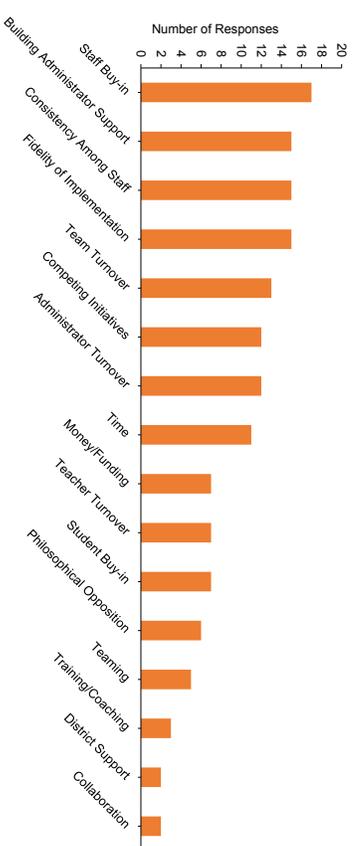


Figure 2. Frequency of Perceived Reasons for Why Schools Abandoned SWPBIS.

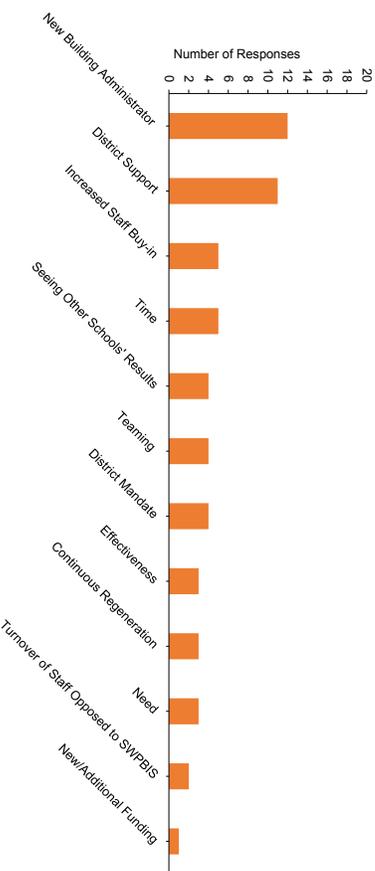


Figure 3. Frequency of Perceived Reasons for Why Schools Readopted SWPBIS.

Categories and Operational Definitions for Open-Ended Responses

Table with 2 columns: Category and Definition. Categories include Perceived reasons schools abandoned SWPBIS (Teaming, Training and/or Coaching, Collaboration), Perceived reasons schools readopted SWPBIS (Renewed Staff Buy-in, Time, Teaming, District Mandate), Effectiveness, Continuous Regeneration, Need for Change, Turnover of Staff Opposed to SWPBIS Implementation, and Need for Change.

DISCUSSION

Results confirm that buy-in from district building administrators, and general school personnel is critical. Without strong leadership support, implementation is likely to suffer (Bohannon et al., 2018), which can result in schools abandoning critical features or SWPBIS entirely.

Unified support from district and school leadership may help school teams provide direction and consistency with SWPBIS implementation. Leadership support may also reduce competing initiatives.

Recommendations: Strategies for readopting SWPBIS include providing staff with an understanding of factors led to abandonment, developing safeguards to help prevent future abandonment, providing more time to staff to readopt, and introducing school teams to model exemplars.

REFERENCES

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