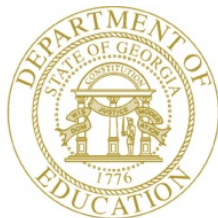




THE STRATEGIC PLAN

2014-2020



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Discipline: *Training expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior, especially training that produces moral or mental improvement by instruction and practice.*
(Derived from the Latin word *disciplina* meaning pupil.)¹

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2007, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), Division for Special Education Services, established the Positive Behavior Support Unit to provide professional learning and technical assistance in behavioral supports to address the disproportionate rates of suspension of students with disabilities. The majority of the professional learning and technical assistance, which focused on interventions for students experiencing behavioral problems, was provided to Student Support Teams (SST) and special education personnel. The PBIS unit discovered that in many cases, schools did not have a continuum of behavioral interventions nor did they have processes of data review or analysis in place to prevent or address problems before they reached a level resulting in suspensions. The need for proactive and preventative practices, in addition to effective discipline procedures, became a priority, and the evidence-based framework of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) was identified as the best way to address the need.

The PBIS process is an evidence-based framework that assists school teams in implementing systems change. The primary goal of the PBIS framework is to help schools design effective environments that increase teaching and learning for all students. Through a problem-solving approach, the PBIS framework begins with examining and improving the entire school climate. Teams use data to examine the reasons behaviors are occurring and then implement changes and interventions designed to address the identified needs. PBIS is a preventative and proactive system of addressing discipline problems that includes fair and consistent discipline practices unlike traditional discipline methods that have addressed discipline problems through punishment.

In early 2008, the GaDOE contacted Dr. George Sugai at the PBIS National Technical Assistance Center (TA Center) for assistance in establishing a PBIS network in Georgia. The TA Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports was established by the Office of Special Education Programs, United States Department of Education, to give schools capacity-building information and technical assistance for identifying, adapting, and sustaining effective school-wide disciplinary practices. Dr. Heather Peshak George, Co-Principal Investigator, Co-Director, and Research Partner in the TA Center, became Georgia's Resource Agent; and she has assisted GaDOE in in this work since that time.

To meet the requirements of an implementing PBIS state, a State Leadership Team was formed, a state action plan was developed, and members of the GaDOE Positive Behavior Support Unit were trained by Dr. George. During the summer of 2008, forty-seven school teams were trained, including all schools from Lee County and Emmanuel County who agreed to serve as pilot districts. Currently, in 2014, over 400 school teams from 36 Local Education Agencies

¹ Discipline [Def.1]. (n.d.). *American heritage dictionary of the English language online*. Retrieved from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/discipline>, May 14, 2013.

(LEAs) have been trained; and a comprehensive system of technical assistance has been created to support districts, schools, and programs throughout the state.

On August 6 and 7, 2013, with support from the Chick-fil-A Foundation, the GaDOE brought together key stakeholders to inform the development of a state plan that would detail how Georgia can both promote the implementation of PBIS in schools across the state and support districts choosing to participate. During the two-day summit, participants reviewed and shared ongoing efforts and challenges in addressing the mental, social, emotional, and behavioral needs of children and youth in Georgia. The group also began to identify the critical elements needed to create a statewide plan that would support Georgia schools in addressing climate, safety, and discipline practices. Guided by the principles of implementation science, the group focused on engaging districts in systems change that would support schools in meeting the behavioral needs of the children and youth in those districts.

On January 8, 2014, again with support from the Chick-fil-A Foundation, the GaDOE reconvened the stakeholders to present the draft of the PBIS Strategic plan and to develop a plan to begin implementation. The PBIS Strategic Plan and the Implementation Plan are the results of this work.

II. MISSION AND BELIEFS

The goal at the GaDOE is to support high fidelity implementation of PBIS in schools across the state. The GaDOE PBIS team facilitates district-level planning and provides school team training, technical assistance, and ongoing coaching to district coordinators in order to build capacity and support the PBIS process.

GaPBIS Mission

To improve climates in Georgia schools and community settings through the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework.

Key Features of PBIS

Evidence-based framework developed to assist school teams in providing preventative, positive behavioral support for **ALL** students. This system of support includes:

- ✓ Clearly defined behavioral expectations
- ✓ Social & behavioral skills instruction
- ✓ Positive and proactive discipline
- ✓ Active supervision and monitoring
- ✓ Positive acknowledgement
- ✓ Data-based decision making
- ✓ Parent training and collaboration

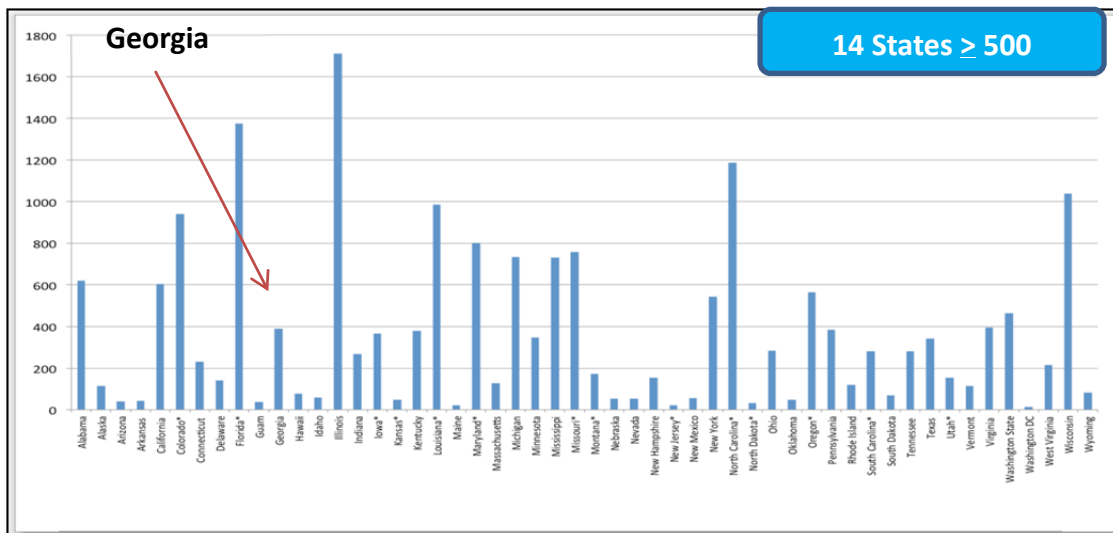
Guided By Our Beliefs

1. Behavior is learned; therefore, it can be taught.
2. Positive, preventative measures are more effective than punitive responses to discipline problems.
3. Effective systems use achievement, attendance, and discipline data to make decisions for improving student outcomes.
4. Families, students, and staff should be actively involved in the decisions affecting the school.
5. Teachers' expectations and beliefs impact students' beliefs and performance.
6. Social-emotional and behavioral competencies are required skills for success in school, college, and careers.

III. PBIS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS provides states and schools with capacity-building information and technical assistance for identifying, adapting, and sustaining effective school-wide disciplinary practices. A network of experts, PBIS Resource Agents, support school-wide implementation of PBIS and collaboration among states and districts and oversee activities across the country. Resource Agents are available to states for assessment of implementation, leadership team facilitation, technical assistance, and development of training and evaluation modules and tools. The PBIS Center, currently in Year 15 (fourth 5-year grant cycle), has assisted in shaping the PBIS framework in almost 20,000 schools.

Researchers from the AT Center developed an Implementation Blueprint to provide implementers with definitions, descriptions, and guidelines that allow for accurate and durable implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) practices and systems. This blueprint guides PBIS organization at the national, state, and local levels. For additional information, refer to the [Implementation Blueprint](#).



Number of Schools Implementing PBIS - February, 2013

IV. PBIS STRUCTURE IN GEORGIA

The GaDOE is working to increase the capacity of Georgia's school districts in the use of team-based planning and problem solving to implement PBIS. Georgia's PBIS model is aligned with and follows the Implementation Blueprint developed by the national researchers. The GaDOE staff currently consists of a State Coordinator and four PBIS program specialists who receive technical assistance from Dr. Heather Peshak George, our Resource Agent in the National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS. Each program specialist provides training, technical assistance, and coaching directly to district leadership teams and an identified district coordinator from each of the Local Education Agencies (LEAs) supported by the GaDOE. In turn, the district coordinators and district leadership teams provide leadership and support to each of their implementing schools through school level coaches.

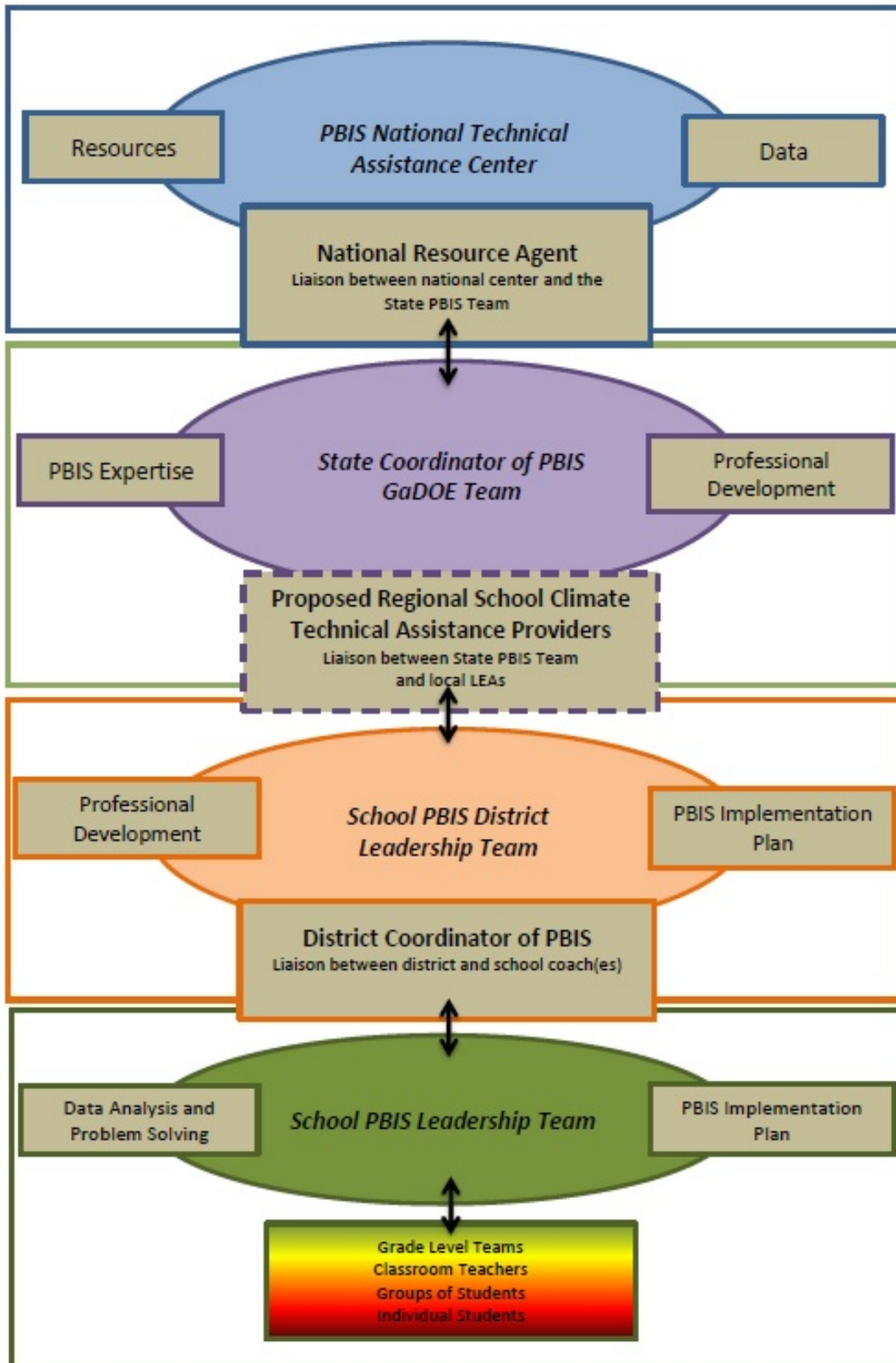
With a relatively small staff to support all LEAs in the state, an established, comprehensive system of supports is critical to providing the preparation, training, coaching, evaluation, and behavioral expertise needed to attain implementation with fidelity. A detailed implementation process has been developed that consists of readiness activities that are grounded in research from the PBIS Systems Implementation Model and National Implementation Research Network for scaling up. Prior to any school receiving training and/or technical assistance, the district is required to complete readiness activities with assistance from the GaDOE PBIS Team. More information on the Implementation Process can be found on the [GaDOE website](#).



Ginny O'Connell, Sandy DeMuth, Justin Hill, Tara Davis, MiMi Gudenrath, and Heather Peshak George

All initial PBIS training is provided by the GaDOE program specialists until skilled trainers are identified in implementing districts. At this time, approximately five district coordinators are co-training with the GaDOE team in their own districts. Technical assistance is provided through on-site district visits, monthly webinars, annual district coordinator meetings, the PBIS web page on the GaDOE website, and frequent email and phone contacts. GaDOE program specialists also facilitate regional meetings and training led by district coordinators for school PBIS coaches upon request. The four GaDOE program specialists currently support 26 Georgia LEAs, including two State Schools and all 24 GNETS programs in either active preparation or full implementation.

National-State-Local Organization of PBIS Implementation and Support



V. KEEPING OUR PROMISES THEN AND NOW: OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The GaPBIS team established the following short-term outcomes in 2008:

- Appropriate behavior,
- Student achievement,
- Parent satisfaction and positive reports about their child’s school as a safe learning environment,
- Teacher satisfaction and positive feelings of safety in the school environment, and
- Use of data in making programmatic decisions.

The GaPBIS team established the following long-term goals in 2008:

- Increase student achievement in reading and mathematics;
- Increase graduation rates/decrease drop-out rates across Georgia;
- Decrease the number of suspensions, expulsions, and out-of-school placements due to behavior problems; and
- Increase the positive behaviors exhibited by students in all settings.

Goals and Outcomes

2008 Goals	2013 Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a statewide network that supports and sustains implementation of PBIS in all school settings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A network of over 200 schools/programs representing over 20% of Georgia LEAs continue implementation of PBIS with fidelity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create awareness and shared language for addressing the social and behavioral needs of children and youth in Georgia schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GaPBIS team has trained over 400 schools involving over 2,000 educators since 2009. • Members of the GaPBIS team have presented PBIS at more than 25 state and national conferences. • The GaPBIS team manages webpages that receive on average over 1,000 unique visitors each month. • As of 2013, PBIS is acknowledged in the College Career Readiness Performance Index as an <i>Innovative Practice</i>.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a data collection and management system that provides reliable and easy access to support evaluation and decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GaPBIS Team utilizes the PBIS Evaluation Tool to assess and analyze fidelity via Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ) [web-based]. • The GaPBIS Team collects and analyzes ISS, OSS, and ODR data directly from schools via an End-of-the-Year Report [paper report].
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a statewide system of professional learning, including trainers and coaches, to support the implementation of PBIS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2009, the GaPBIS team has provided two bi-annual District Coordinator trainings each year for over 200 district/school personnel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate PBIS within coursework offered through institutions of higher education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several Georgia universities offer PBIS content in their Special Education teacher preparation coursework.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Georgia recognized as a leader in statewide implementation of PBIS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia ranks 16th nationally in the number of schools trained in PBIS.

VI. LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

School Climate

School climate refers to the quality and character of the school community. Research indicates that the following are true in a school with a positive school climate:

- Achievement inequities are reduced;
- A safe and drug-free learning environment is provided;
- Social and emotional needs of the whole child are met;
- Student learning is promoted;
- Positive relationships among students, staff, and community are fostered.

School climate is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices, and organizational structures. The long-term effects of positive school climates are increased academic achievement and higher graduation rates. By contrast, a negative school climate fosters an increase in student and staff absenteeism, an increase in discipline referrals, and a decrease in academic achievement. A child cannot learn in an environment of fear and intimidation.

In 2011, Georgia was the first state in the nation to include school climate as an early indicator in its academic accountability system. Data from the Georgia Student Health Survey II, state discipline data, and other sources are used to develop a **School Climate Star Rating**, which is used as a diagnostic tool within the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) to determine if a school is on the right path to school improvement.

PBIS is recommended for schools that receive a low rating on the School Climate Star Rating. Schools implementing PBIS earn credit for this innovative practice, which has created a growing demand for PBIS training and support. The heightened focus on school safety, the data from implementing schools, and meaningful credit on the CCRPI have drastically increased inquiries and requests for PBIS training.

School Safety and Discipline

Parents continue to report their concern for the safety of their children at school (Jones, Aug. 29, 2013). Challenging behaviors in schools that range from disruptive classroom behaviors to physical violence are safety concerns, and they represent barriers to teaching and learning. Educators and parents both share this concern. Rather than relying on short-term solutions for individual students and situations, schools should focus on proactive ways to define, teach, and sustain appropriate student behaviors across all school settings, including the classroom, lunchroom, restrooms, and playground.

In the [Position Statement](#) of the Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence, experts in the field identified four key elements for a broad approach to safer schools: 1. Balance, 2. Communication, 3. Connectedness, and 4. Support. All agreed that prevention is the most effective way to keep children safe in any setting, and the PBIS framework is a proactive and preventative approach that includes the four key elements described above.

Economic Development

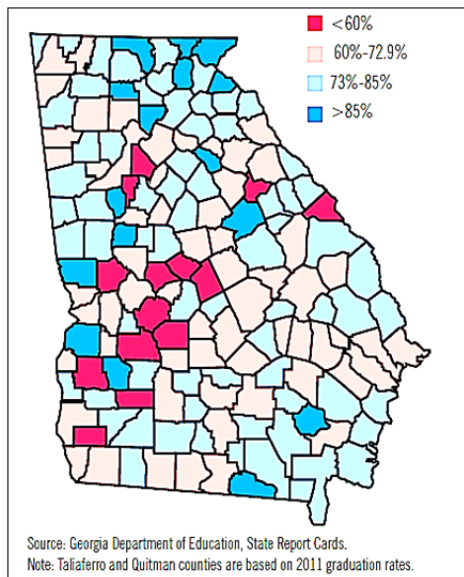
Ask any employer in any industry or region of our state to name the number one impediment to their growth and success today, and they will all give the same answer — the availability of a qualified workforce. Nothing is more important to Georgia’s economic health and our state’s ability to attract and retain jobs than a qualified workforce.

Georgia’s economic health depends on the state’s ability to educate its students and create a strong workforce.

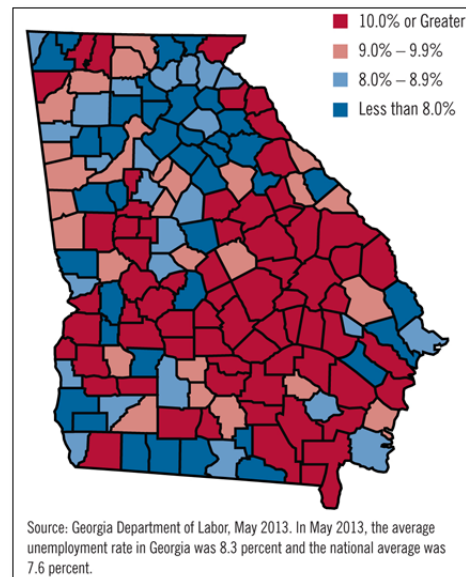
Georgia’s education system is at a critical juncture. Standards are rising for students within the U.S. and globally. Obtaining a high-quality education will increasingly determine each citizen’s prospects for employment, income, and many other life outcomes. Creating safe and engaging schools is vital to our students to enhance the opportunities for graduation.

An additional 30,000 high school graduates in Georgia would mean \$242 million in increased earning potential and \$191 million in increased spending. This additional spending would support a \$350 million increase in state gross product and an estimated \$18 million increase in state tax revenue.

High School Graduation Rates by County, 2012



Unemployment Rate by County, May 2013

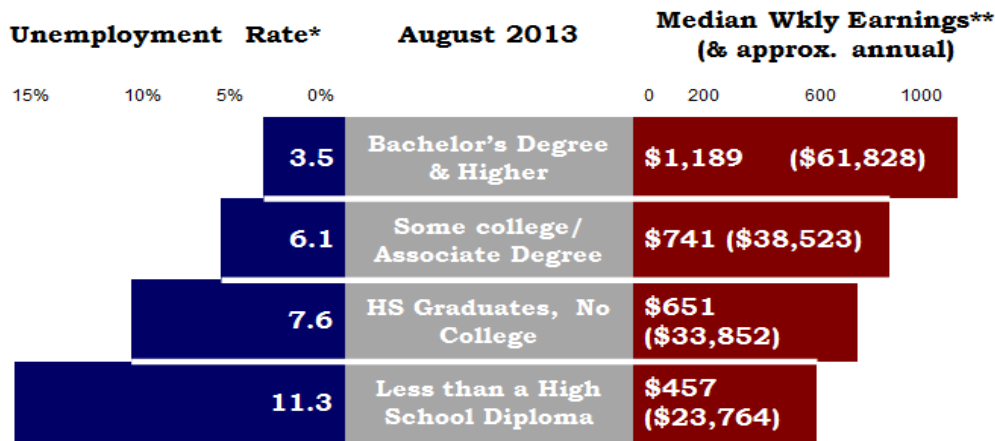


Georgia Needs an Economic Pipeline of Skilled Labor

It is estimated that at least 60% of jobs in 2020 will require some degree of higher education. Currently 42% of Georgians have a post-secondary degree, and that percentage translates into 250,000 new post-secondary graduates by 2020. Georgia needs access to a larger skilled labor pool to fuel a 21st century economy.

Education Pays

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT & EMPLOYMENT



Source: *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Table A-4. Employment status of the civilian population 25 years and over by educational attainment.
**U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Table 5. Quartiles of usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers.

VII. 2014-2020 STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1. Increase awareness & visibility of PBIS

The PBIS framework needs to be openly marketed to and regularly shared with families, school based staff, school administration, and communities in an effort to increase awareness of the multi-tiered support framework and to promote access to technical assistance services and resources through the GaDOE.

Due to the accessibility of many online PBIS resources, some schools have adopted elements of PBIS practices but have failed to implement the entire framework. These schools do not achieve the expected results; consequently, they may determine that PBIS “does not work.” Their efforts to implement are often incomplete and unsustainable, resulting in failed implementation. To avoid misperceptions as to what PBIS is, how it is implemented and evaluated, or how a school qualifies as a PBIS school, a clear and consistent message is needed.

Objective 1.1. Create a logo and tagline that uniquely identifies Georgia PBIS

PBIS has been known by different names due to various projects funded by multiple grants since 1987. In the initial grant, the framework was identified as *Positive Behavior Support* or *PBS*. Earlier training in PBIS in Georgia was provided through a State Improvement Grant in a project called “*Effective Behavioral Interventions and Supports* or *EBIS*.” Because of the various projects and funding sources, many people don’t realize that the different names represent the same framework. Because the fully written name of PBIS is so long, it is commonly referred to by its acronym, which causes confusion as to what the letters actually stand for.

Performance measures:

- 1. Develop a graphic design or logo for Georgia PBIS**
- 2. Develop a tagline that uniquely identifies Georgia PBIS**
- 3. Establish a clear, concise, and consistent description of Georgia PBIS**

Objective 1.2. Create a unified PBIS communication plan

A critical component for scaling up and sustaining PBIS efforts is the creation of a system of communication across school, family, and community partners. The communication system should allow for easy sharing of information across the state and ready access to data used for decision making. Increasing school, community, and family awareness of the opportunity for PBIS in all Georgia schools and highlighting the positive impact of the framework is particularly challenging due to Georgia's size and the number of LEAs in the state. Opportunities to network and share resources are limited by geography, so a formalized communication plan is needed to reach all stakeholders in the state and to build capacity and sustainability. Georgia's population is very diverse, requiring materials and information to be available in multiple languages and formats.

Performance measures:

- 1. Develop a social media platform**
- 2. Create public service announcements**
- 3. Create videos to highlight PBIS with interviews, school examples, data, etc.**
- 4. Create direct web links to GaPBIS homepage from all partnered agencies and organizations**

GOAL 2. Expand the infrastructure to lead & support PBIS implementation

The Georgia PBIS Team, which has been based in the Division for Special Education Services and Supports from its inception, leads the state work for scaling up PBIS. Directing the statewide effort requires a fully dedicated staff with specific skills to plan, manage, and support the work through ongoing training, facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and reporting, and the addressing of all logistical and administrative details needed to support Local Education Agencies (LEAs).

Both immediate and long-term needs for additional support staff exist at the state and regional levels in order to increase and sustain long term implementation of PBIS in Georgia. The current staff of four program specialists and a Program Manager at GaDOE carries out training and support activities related to PBIS implementation in Georgia and prepares an average of fifty school teams per year. In order to increase the Georgia PBIS team's ability to expand implementation, a concerted effort among the state department of education, non-profit organizations, college and universities, and policy makers is necessary to ensure the commitment of dollars and resources for a successful expansion. Likewise, the GaDOE must make a concerted effort to increase teaming with other departments and state agencies.

Objective 2.1. Form a State Leadership Team to guide and support the PBIS Strategic Plan

The purpose or mission of a Leadership Team is to “provide overall leadership related to assessing, developing, implementing, managing, and evaluating” PBIS for all students. The leadership team should include members from a wide range of stakeholder groups, such as education leadership, professional development, specialists who support individuals with behavior challenges, and advocacy groups representing families and community members. A State Leadership Team is needed to guide and steer the scale-up of PBIS implementation and to provide an accountability process for The Georgia PBIS Strategic Plan.

Performance measures:

- 1. Identify diverse stakeholders that represent Georgia’s population**
- 2. Establish roles and responsibilities for the State Leadership Team**
- 3. Establish meeting schedule and meeting procedures (norms)**

Objective 2.2. Increase capacity within RESA to support PBIS implementation

The Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) is comprised of 16 regional educational service agencies strategically located in service districts throughout the state of Georgia. These agencies were established for the purpose of sharing services designed to improve the effectiveness of the educational programs of member school districts. Building on an existing resource is the most logical way to provide regional technical assistance in PBIS and school climate activities. Building regional expertise in the areas of behavior, discipline practices, discipline data analysis, and other school climate components compliments the technical assistance already provided by the RESAs and makes PBIS much more accessible throughout the state. As the awareness of successful implementation of PBIS and improved student outcomes grows, the requests for professional development and technical assistance continues to increase. In order to improve professional development and technical assistance capacity, the building of a parallel system of support from the state level, to Regional Educational Support Agencies (RESA), to districts, and then to schools is necessary. Building a parallel system of support improves the quality and quantity of support given to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and ensures effective systems are in place to increase sustainability and fidelity over time.

Performance measures:

- 1. Develop a dedicated line item in the state budget to fund 16 positions at RESA**
- 2. Define the roles and responsibilities of PBIS School Climate Specialists at RESAs**
- 3. Design the ongoing professional learning support for RESA PBIS School Climate Specialists**
- 4. Develop MOUs and/or assurances with RESA for supporting PBIS School Climate Specialists**

Objective 2.3. Increase capacity and collaboration within GaDOE divisions related to student discipline

A challenge to expanding the GaDOE PBIS team is the lack of dedicated financial resources available for PBIS efforts. To increase sustainability of current implementation and to foster statewide expansion, efforts should be made to realign state resources to support this work. Resource mapping within the GaDOE is recommended to identify current programs and services that have a common purpose designed to address discipline issues, school climate, safety, and meeting the behavioral/social/emotional needs of students. Collaborative planning to cultivate new partnerships within the GaDOE will reduce duplication of services and increase the chances of meeting our shared goals.

Performance measures:

- 1. Identify and align the efforts of all GaDOE units currently working to improve school climate, discipline, student supports, mental health, and school counselors**
- 2. Establish meeting schedule and meeting procedures (norms) to facilitate collaboration for units and divisions working on shared goals of student supports and discipline**
- 3. Cross train unit/division staff involved with interventions, student supports, discipline, school safety, etc.**

Objective 2.4. Increase collaboration with Georgia colleges and universities to scale up and sustain PBIS implementation through collaborative agreements

A number of PBIS experts are based in Georgia colleges and universities, but currently many of these experts and universities are working in silos to support individual schools, districts, or research projects. Working through a State PBIS Strategic Plan and State Leadership Team, these resources could be coordinated to support more robust training and implementation across Georgia.

Performance measures:

- 1. Identify all teacher/leader education programs in Georgia and determine the extent to which PBIS is already taught**
- 2. Increase PBIS training within teacher/leader curricula programs in Georgia**
- 3. Establish MOUs and/or assurances with colleges and universities to provide regional technical assistance to LEAs in PBIS implementation**
- 4. Establish agreements with colleges or universities to complete research projects on PBIS implementation**

GOAL 3. Increase training & coaching capacity at all tiers on the PBIS continuum

Practices within PBIS are organized across a continuum of tiered supports for students. A tiered approach provides layers of intervention for students. This support ranges in scope and varies in intensity from low intensity supports (Tier 1 supports for all students) to high intensity supports (Tier 3 or 4 supports for students with chronic or significant academic, behavioral, and/or mental health needs).

Georgia has implemented a four-tiered Response to Intervention (RTI) model referred to as [The Georgia Student Achievement Pyramid](#) to identify and address students' academic and/or behavioral needs. When united with support for student safety and school climate, this tiered approach becomes the preferred prevention model for Georgia schools.

Objective 3.1. Develop a comprehensive PBIS curriculum to support the behavioral/social-emotional learning needs of students at Tier 1 (80% of students), Tier 2 (15% of students), and Tiers 3 and 4 (5%)

By the fall of 2013, approximately 20% of Georgia districts had schools trained in the Tier 1 PBIS behavior support system, while just a small number of schools had received training in the process of identifying students who need additional tiered supports. Standardized curricula for all tiers of support need to be developed or standardized, implemented, and evaluated to address the needs of the districts for supporting their students more effectively.

At Tier 1, a PBIS curriculum has been successfully utilized for years to assist districts and schools in building their Tier 1 systems of support. However, research indicates that more should be considered when taking on high schools. Researchers involved in the high school reform effort recognize that high schools have unique needs. A more specialized readiness process that includes a training curriculum is needed for high schools so that better outcomes are achieved. Georgia PBIS needs to consider such factors when supporting high school implementation.

At Tier 2, the Georgia PBIS team has provided training, on a limited basis, on the *Check-in, Check-out system* to address the behavior needs of students. The *Check-in, Check-out system* is favored by elementary school level implementers of PBIS, but less so at the secondary levels. More is needed in this area to address behavior support at secondary levels.

This curriculum must also address the Student Support Team (SST). The success of SST relies on the foundation established at Tiers 1 and 2. Success is attainable when schools are able both to analyze their data to identify school-wide, classroom, and individual student needs and to use appropriate evidence-based strategies and interventions. Currently, the Georgia PBIS unit has not adopted a standardized curriculum to support this tier.

Performance Measures:

- 1. Develop a Standardized Readiness Process for Tier 1**
- 2. Develop a Standardized Readiness Process for Tier I specifically for the high school setting**
- 3. Develop a Standardized Readiness Process for Tier II**
- 4. Develop a Standardized Readiness Process for Tiers III-IV**
- 5. Develop a curriculum for Tier I specifically for the high school setting**
- 6. Develop a curriculum for Tier II**
- 7. Develop a curriculum for Tiers III-IV**
- 8. Develop District Leadership Team training**

Objective 3.2. Develop a coaching and technical assistance model for school PBIS Coaches

The most effective and efficient means of providing tiered support to districts is to establish a comprehensive statewide network where coordination and synchronization of coaching and leadership practices and procedures can occur. The development of local coaching skills is the most efficient way to increase local adoption of this evidenced-based framework. By enhancing the skills of school coaches, Georgia PBIS can better prepare and sustain schools for the hard work of building their tiered support structures.

Performance Measure:

- 1. Develop procedures for prepping, training, and supporting school PBIS implementation**
- 2. Develop a Standardized Coaching Curriculum**
- 3. Develop a Standardized District Coordinator/Leadership Team Curriculum**

Objective 3.3. Develop a coaching and technical assistance model for PBIS District Coordinators

Like Objective 3.2, the development of local coordination skills is the most efficient way to increase local adoption of this evidenced-based framework. By enhancing the skills of district personnel, Georgia PBIS can better prepare and sustain districts and school coaches for the hard work of building tiered support structures in their schools. The growth and sustainability of PBIS requires ongoing coaching and technical assistance. By enhancing the skills of district and school personnel, coaching and technical assistance will be more readily available and adaptable to individual school needs. To avoid becoming dependent on “outside” expertise to guide this work, GaPBIS must enhance local capacity.

Performance Measure:

- 1. Develop procedures for preparing, training, and supporting PBIS district Coordinators**

Objective: 3.4. Develop a coaching and technical assistance model for PBIS/Climate Specialists to be located in each RESA

Currently, all districts implementing PBIS in Georgia are provided technical assistance and support from one of four GaDOE PBIS specialists. In order to improve the geographic ease of support and expand regional capacity for improving this layered approach to student support, a network of regional experts needs to be developed. Georgia’s RESA network is the most logical and best developed agency to enhance GaPBIS efforts to expand local implementation of PBIS.

Performance Measure:

- 1. Develop procedures for preparing districts for PBIS implementation, delivering training, and supporting and coaching districts**

Objective: 3.5. Develop a PBIS curriculum and training module for families and communities.

Creating a unified PBIS message and consistent language among community stakeholders is necessary to generate understanding of the PBIS framework. Furthermore, educating families on how to integrate the PBIS framework within the home setting is a critical component to educating the whole child. Providing community agencies and parents or guardians with the correct understanding and awareness of PBIS will create a community of respectful and prepared citizens.

Performance Measure:

- 1. Develop a training curriculum for the family setting**
- 2. Establish a standardized inter-agency PBIS awareness training**

GOAL 4. Develop a comprehensive PBIS evaluation system

Documenting what PBIS looks like, how well it is being implemented, and how it affects social and academic behavior is essential for replicating, sustaining, and improving implementation at the local and state levels. Currently, the fidelity of implementation at all tiers is evaluated through *PBIS Assessment*, which is available to all schools working with the state PBIS team.

[PBIS Assessment](#) is a web-based application that provides tools for assessing schools' current disciplinary practices, effectiveness in initial implementation, continued fidelity to the PBIS framework, and effective implementation of all four tiers. *PBIS Assessment* provides surveys for teams to use to examine their level of PBIS adoption and guides them through the process for improving implementation to benefit students, their families, and the overall school culture. Surveys are completed online, with reports immediately available as soon as a survey is submitted.

Analysis of state longitudinal data showing the successes in discipline, achievement, and attendance from successful PBIS implementation does not currently exist. Its availability would encourage increased buy in on multiple levels: from families, teachers, and administrators to local superintendents, state agency leaders, and legislators, by showing how PBIS is impacting school climate.

Ready access to meaningful behavior data will likewise enable local schools and programs to see where continued behavior problems occur and how that impacts learning in Georgia schools and classrooms. Since most Georgia schools do not currently have access to the data necessary for this type of analysis, they are required to utilize an accompanying data system or SWIS (www.swis.org) during the first year of their implementation.

The GaDOE PBIS Unit, in collaboration with our university evaluation partners, will publish an Annual Evaluation Report on the GaDOE website (www.gadoe.org) that is transparent and accessible to our stakeholders and to the public. Content of the report will include progress on state PBIS goals and objectives included in this Implementation Plan. The information will be published in a format that will be clear and understandable and that will allow users to see trends and impact on school climate.

The PBIS team publishes an annual list of schools identified as Emergent or Operational based on data submitted by each school. This documentation includes reduction in office discipline referrals, a walk through verifying PBIS implementation in the school, and fidelity assessments that include the Team Implementation Checklist, TIC, (a progress monitoring tool) and the Benchmarks of Quality, BoQ, (a summative assessment tool). The TIC and BoQ are evidence-based PBIS assessment tools.

A hallmark of PBIS is a commitment to formal evaluation, which is mandatory for all schools participating in the state work. Progress monitoring and evaluation of implementation and student impact is achieved through the use of *PBIS Assessment*, a web-based application provided at no cost to PBIS schools working with the state. The Team Implementation Checklist (TIC), school walk throughs, the Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ), and the End-of-Year (EOY) reports are used by school teams to monitor implementation and target areas of need. The GaDOE uses this data as part of a recognition system for schools implementing with fidelity. State level data is also used for planning and evaluation at the state level.

Objective 4.1. Develop a comprehensive process and reporting schedule for evaluating statewide PBIS implementation and student impact

All of the evaluation of PBIS implementation and student impact data is currently being completed manually by the GaDOE PBIS team. Without an efficient mechanism for collecting and reporting data and developing an annual evaluation report, this process is very time-consuming. An evaluation process led by a qualified program evaluator will ensure accurate and timely data that will meet the needs for active decision making at the state level.

Performance Measures:

- 1. Form a PBIS evaluation team**
- 2. Develop a state evaluation plan to measure context, support, fidelity, and student impact**
- 3. Create a data-reporting platform for End-of-the-Year (EOY) school data**
- 4. Engage a program evaluator for PBIS work**
- 5. Implement a PBIS recognition system for the continuum of implementation**

GOAL 5. Engage community stakeholders in PBIS

Georgia has adopted the System of Care approach with the mission: “to reach, support and empower communities to serve Georgia’s children and families.” The core values of the system of care philosophy specify that services should be community based, child centered and family focused, and culturally and linguistically competent. The guiding principles specify that services should be:

- Comprehensive, incorporating a broad array of services and supports;
- Individualized;
- Provided in the least restrictive, appropriate setting;
- Coordinated both at the system and service delivery levels;
- Designed to involve families and youth as full partners; and

- Focused on early identification and intervention. (Pires, 2002)

The key features and guiding principles of PBIS mirror the system of care principles and provide the framework for connecting education to other agencies and entities with the same values and principles. The PBIS movement within Georgia creates the interconnection needed to coordinate services for children and families through a sense of common purpose and goals.

From the Governor’s Office for Children and Families (GOCF) mission, “. . . to ensure that all children and families are educated, healthy, safe and growing” to the mission of the Department of Juvenile Justice of “supporting youth in their communities to become productive and law-abiding citizens,” many agencies and organizations are committing resources to support similar goals. The Georgia Department of Education is leading efforts to cultivate new partnerships and encourage collaboration in identifying resources and services to avoid duplication of efforts and to maximize the quality, depth, and breadth of those resources and supports.

The two Statewide Summits for PBIS, in August 2013 and January 2014, brought together a diverse group of stakeholders from both the private and public sectors to learn about and discuss how the PBIS framework supports the goals for improving outcomes for Georgia’s children (see Appendices [A](#) and [B](#)). These unprecedented gatherings of state agencies, advocacy groups, foundations, legislators, community & professional organizations, higher education, and more, created partnerships committed to promoting and ensuring positive academic, social, and mental health outcomes for all students in all settings.

Objective 5.1. Incorporate PBIS shared beliefs and common language within state agency goals/objectives and strategic plans to improve outcomes for Georgia children, youth, and families

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework that promotes a natural relationship between schools and other child-serving state agencies. This interconnected systems relationship enhances prevention, intervention, and mental health, and promotes improved outcomes for all children and youth.

Performance measure:

- 1. Complete a review of goals and strategic plans for each state agency to evaluate for inclusion of shared beliefs and common language**
- 2. Complete a review of goals and strategic plans for community stakeholders to evaluate for inclusion of shared beliefs and common language**
- 3. Collaborate and support peer learning across multi-agency/organization partners**
- 4. Increase partnerships with statewide initiatives that share the goals of PBIS**

Objective 5.2. Incorporate PBIS shared beliefs and common language within community stakeholder groups’ goals/objectives and strategic plans to improve outcomes for Georgia children, youth, and families

A collaborative relationship between schools, families, and community agencies can strengthen services, thus successfully meeting the emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of *all* students. Foundational to this collaborative work is a shared agenda in which families, schools, mental health systems, and other youth serving community systems work together to build a full continuum of multi-tiered programs and services for students and their families (Barrett, Eber, and Weist, 2013).

Performance measures:

- 1. Complete a review of goals and strategic plans of community stakeholder groups to evaluate for inclusion of shared beliefs and common language**
- 2. Provide training in Foundations of PBIS to community groups to increase awareness**

Objective 5.3. Create shared beliefs of PBIS principles with key policy makers

Since PBIS is most effective and sustainable with the full support and commitment of district level administrators, it is critical that district policies and practices include PBIS. In order for this to occur, key policy makers must be informed and involved in adopting these practices.

Performance measure:

- 1. Increase the number of school districts that engage in PBIS implementation (in preparation, emergent, and operational).**

VIII. STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION

This strategic plan was collaboratively written by the Georgia Department of Education Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Team: Ginny O’Connell, Mimi Gudenrath, Tara Davis, Sandy DeMuth, and Justin Hill. This plan reflects input from stakeholders across the GaDOE, external partners, and our PBIS Resource Agent, Dr. Heather Peshak George.

IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A: 2013 Statewide PBIS Summit Participants

Advocacy Organizations

Sharon Hill, Georgia Appleseed
Robert Rhodes, Georgia Appleseed
Melody Chapman, Georgia Appleseed
Leslie Lipson, Georgia Advocacy Office
Holli Levinson, Anti-Defamation League, Southeast Region

Foundations

Gail Hayes, Annie E. Casey Foundation
Arienne Weldon, Annie E. Casey Foundation
Kent McGuire, Southern Education Foundation
Vanessa Elkan, Southern Education Foundation
Jean Walker, United Way of Greater Atlanta
Louis Negrón, United Way of Greater Atlanta

REACH GA

Brad Bryant, Executive Director

Georgia Families

Gaye Smith, Georgia Family Connection Partnership
Lisa Brewer, Georgia Family Connection Partnership

The Governor's Office for Children and Families

Katie Jo Ballard, Executive Director

The Carter Center

Lei Ellingson, Assistant Director of Mental Health Policy

Leadership Georgia

Matt Bishop, Board of Trustees

LEA Representatives

Anthony Pack, Superintendent, Monroe County Schools
Craig Lockhart, Newton County Schools
Bob Burgess, Gwinnett County Schools

Georgia State Board of Education

Helen Rice
Mary Sue Murray
Lisa Kinnemore

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Monica Parker, Director of Community Health
Linda Henderson, Director of Child & Adolescent Mental Health

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Jenny Couture, Bright from the Start
Cassa Andrews, Department of Early Care & Learning

Regional Education Service Agencies

Carolyn Williams, Middle Georgia RESA
Leigh Ann Putnam, Metro RESA

Georgia Council on Substance Abuse

Dietra Hawkins

Georgia Department of Education

John Barge, State Superintendent of Schools
Mike Buck, Chief Academic Officer
Joel Thornton, Chief of Staff
Deborah Gay, Director of Special Education
Ginny O'Connell, State PBIS Coordinator
Tara Davis, PBIS Program Specialist
MiMi Gudenrath, PBIS Program Specialist
Sandy DeMuth, PBIS Program Specialist
Justin Hill, PBIS Program Specialist
Michelle Sandrock, Program Manager, Parent Engagement
Marilyn Watson, Safe and Drug Free Schools
Jeff Hodges, Safe and Drug Free Schools

Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services

Sharon Hill, Deputy Director

Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice:

Avery Niles, Commissioner
Miguel Fernandez, Assistant Commissioner
Dr. Audrey Armistad, Assistant Superintendent

Georgia Juvenile Court Judge

Velma Tilley, Bartow Co.

Legislators:

Randy Nix, Georgia House of Representatives, 69th District, Education Committee
Katie Dempsey, Georgia House of Representatives, 13th District, First Lady's Georgia Children's Cabinet

Institutes of Higher Education:

Dan Crimmins, Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Georgia State University
Rob Sumowski, Georgia College and State University
Kimberly Drawdy, Georgia Southern University
Carolina Darbisi, J. W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development, University of Georgia

National Association of State Boards of Education

Kimberly Charis, Project Director, Center for Safe and Healthy Schools

National PBIS Technical Assistance Center

Heather Peshak George

Professional Educator Associations

Jimmy Stokes, Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL)
Bruce Rogers, President, Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP)
Barbara Strickland, Past President, Georgia School Counselors Association (GSCA)
Patrick Kennedy, President, Student Support Team Association of Georgia Educators (SSTAGE)
Leonora Clarkson, Georgia Association of Positive Behavior Supports (Ga-APBS)

Appendix B: 2014 Statewide PBIS Summit Participants

Advocacy Organizations

Sharon Hill, Georgia Appleseed
Robert Rhodes, Georgia Appleseed

Foundations

Christine Brodnan, Annie E. Casey Foundation
Arianne Weldon, Annie E. Casey Foundation
Vanessa Elkan, Southern Education Foundation
Louis Negrón, United Way of Greater Atlanta

REACH GA

Brad Bryant, Executive Director

Georgia Families:

Lisa Brewer, Georgia Family Connection Partnership
Celeste Orr, Georgia Family Connection Partnership

The Governor's Office for Children and Families

Katie Jo Ballard, Executive Director

Regional Education Service Agencies

Carolyn Williams, Middle Georgia RESA

PBIS School Districts/Programs

Brian Campbell, Lincoln County Schools
Anthony Pack, Superintendent, Monroe County Schools
Jim Finch, Monroe County Schools
Bob Burgess, Gwinnett County Schools
Lara Sims, Elam Alexander Academy GNETS

Georgia State Board of Education

Helen Rice
Lisa Kinnemore

Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Linda Henderson, Director of Child & Adolescent Mental Health

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Jenny Couture, Bright from the Start
Cassa Andrews, Department of Early Care & Learning

Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services

Sharon Hill, Deputy Director

Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice

Miguel Fernandez, Assistant Commissioner
Denise McClain, PBIS Coordinator

Legislators

Randy Nix, Georgia House of Representatives, 69th District, Education Committee
Katie Dempsey, Georgia House of Representatives, 13th District, First Lady's Georgia Children's Cabinet

Institutes of Higher Education

Daniel Crimmins, Georgia State University
Kimberly Drawdy, Georgia Southern University
Joel Myers, Georgia State University
Emmet Shaffer, J.W. Fanning Institute, University of Georgia
Rob Sumowski, Georgia College and State University

National PBIS Technical Assistance Center

Heather Peshak George

Georgia Council on Substance Abuse

Dietra Hawkins

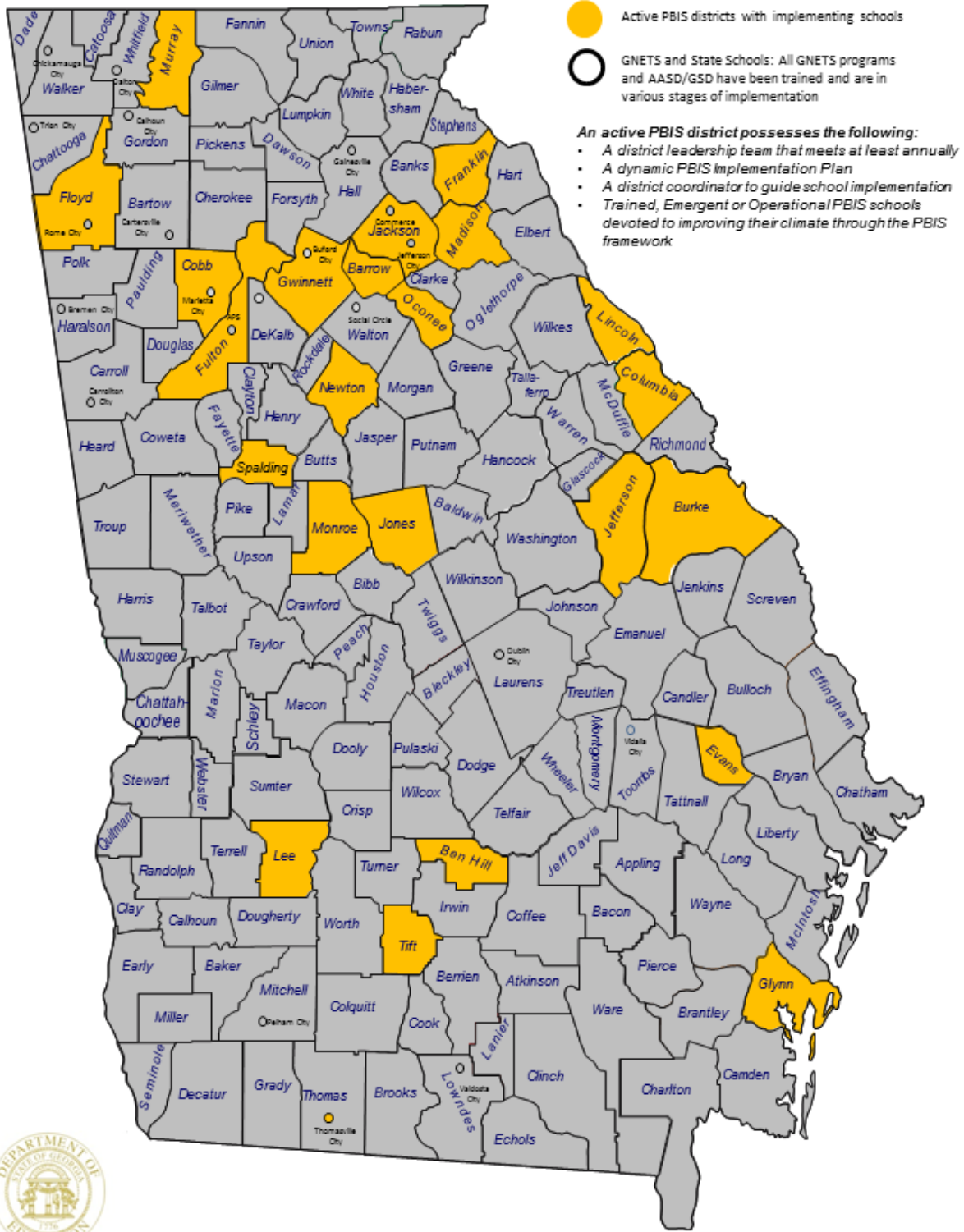
Professional Educator Associations

Jimmy Stokes, Georgia Association of Educational Leaders (GAEL)
Cathy McKenzie, Georgia Association of School Psychologists (GASP)
Tinisha Parker, Georgia School Counselors Association (GSCA)
Patrick Kennedy, Student Support Team Association of Georgia Educators (SSTAGE)
Leonora Clarkson, Georgia Association of Positive Behavior Supports (Ga-APBS)

Georgia Department of Education

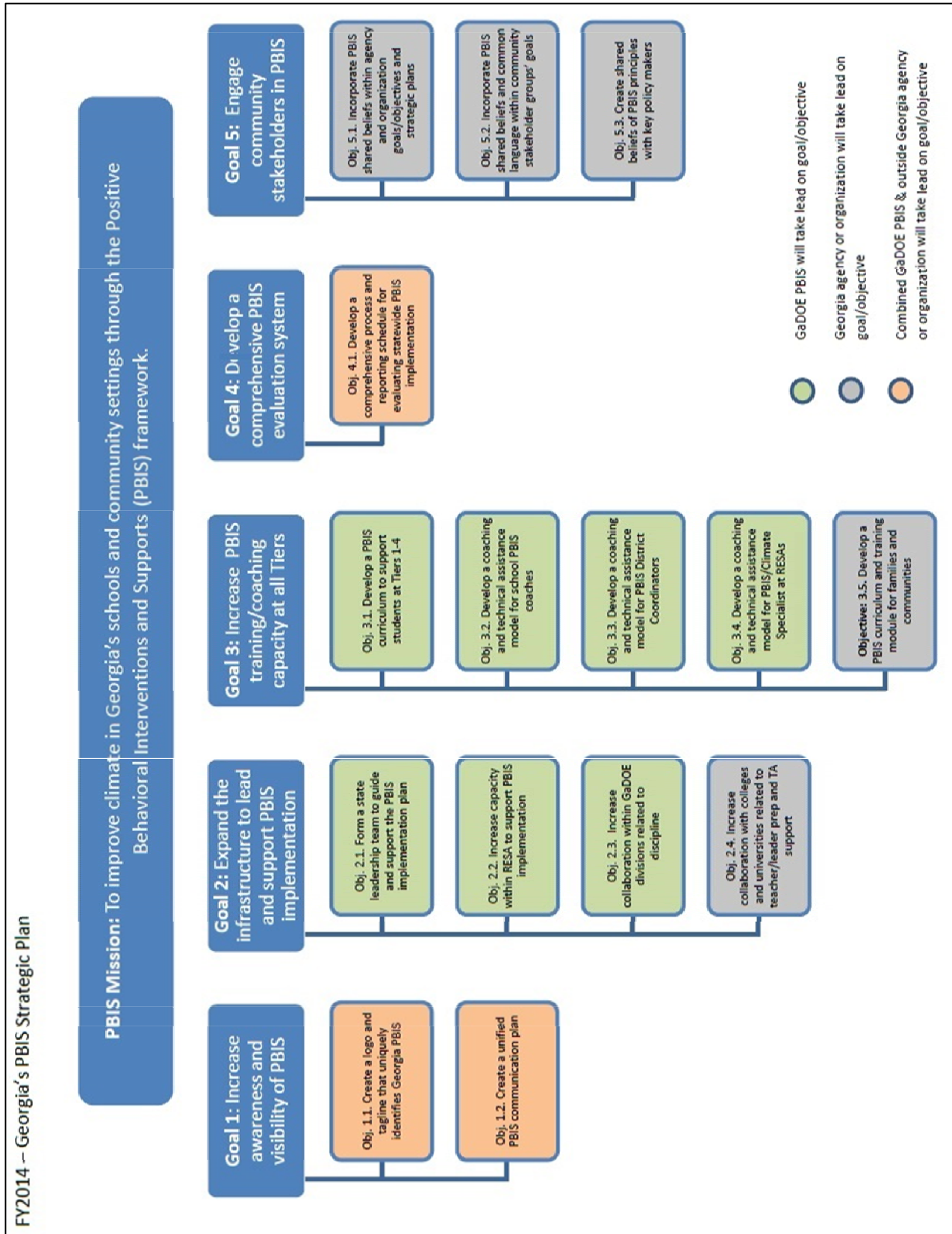
John Barge, State Superintendent of Schools
Ron Culver, Assistant to the Superintendent
Matt Cardoza, Director of Communications
Martha Reichrath, Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Garry McGiboney, Deputy Superintendent of Schools
Deborah Gay, Director of Special Education
Zelphine Smith-Dixon, Assistant Director of Special Education
Ginny O'Connell, State PBIS Coordinator
Tara Davis, PBIS Program Specialist
MiMi Gudenrath, PBIS Program Specialist
Sandy DeMuth, PBIS Program Specialist
Justin Hill, PBIS Program Specialist
Anne Ladd, Family Engagement Specialist
Marilyn Watson, Safe and Drug Free Schools
Jeff Hodges, Safe and Drug Free Schools

Appendix C: FY14 Active Georgia Districts Implementing PBIS



Current as of 12/20/2013

Appendix D: Georgia PBIS Mission, Goals, and Objectives Graphic



Appendix E: Glossary of Terms

Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ): An instrument completed yearly by PBIS Teams to identify areas of success and areas of improvement.

Bright From the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families.

College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI): A comprehensive school improvement, accountability, and community platform for all educational stakeholders that will promote college and career readiness for all Georgia public school students.

Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ): Multi-faceted agency that provides a wide range of services for youthful offenders across the state.

Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE): Agency that oversees public education throughout the state, ensuring that laws and regulations pertaining to education are followed.

Georgia Learning Resource Systems (GLRS): A network of 17 regional programs that provide training and resources to school district personnel, parents of students with disabilities, and other interested individuals to support the achievement, graduation rate, and post-secondary success of students with disabilities.

Georgia Network for Therapeutic Supports (GNETS): Twenty-four programs in Georgia that support local school districts' continuum of services for students with disabilities, ages 3-21.

In-school suspension (ISS): A form of punishment for students who have violated school rules; students assigned ISS report to school as usual but sit in a special room for one day or multiple days with a certified teacher and access to instructional materials.

Local Education Agency (LEA): A commonly used synonym for a school district, an entity that operates local public primary and secondary schools in the United States.

Office Discipline Referral (ODR): A teacher referral of a student to the office due to behavior that requires administrative intervention.

Out-of-school suspension (OSS): Mandatory leave assigned to a student as a form of punishment that can extend from one day to several weeks, during which time the student is not allowed to attend regular lessons on school grounds.

PBIS Assessment: Web-based application designed to assist in high fidelity, sustained implementation of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports.

PBIS Evaluation: Web-based application combining data from SWIS and PBIS Assessments across all schools within a state, region, or district.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): A framework designed to enhance academic and social-behavior outcomes by implementing a continuum of evidence-based interventions.

Public Service Announcement (PSA): Messages in the public interest disseminated by the media without charge.

Regional Education Service Agency (RESA): Sixteen agencies, strategically located in service districts throughout the state of Georgia, established for the purpose of sharing services designed to improve the effectiveness of the educational programs of member school systems.

Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC): Facility that provides temporary, secure care and supervision to youth who have been charged with offenses or who have been adjudicated delinquent and are awaiting placement.

Response to Intervention (RtI): A general educational framework that involves evidence-based instruction and interventions and regular monitoring of student progress.

School Climate Rating: Diagnostic tool within the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) to determine whether a school is on the right path to school improvement.

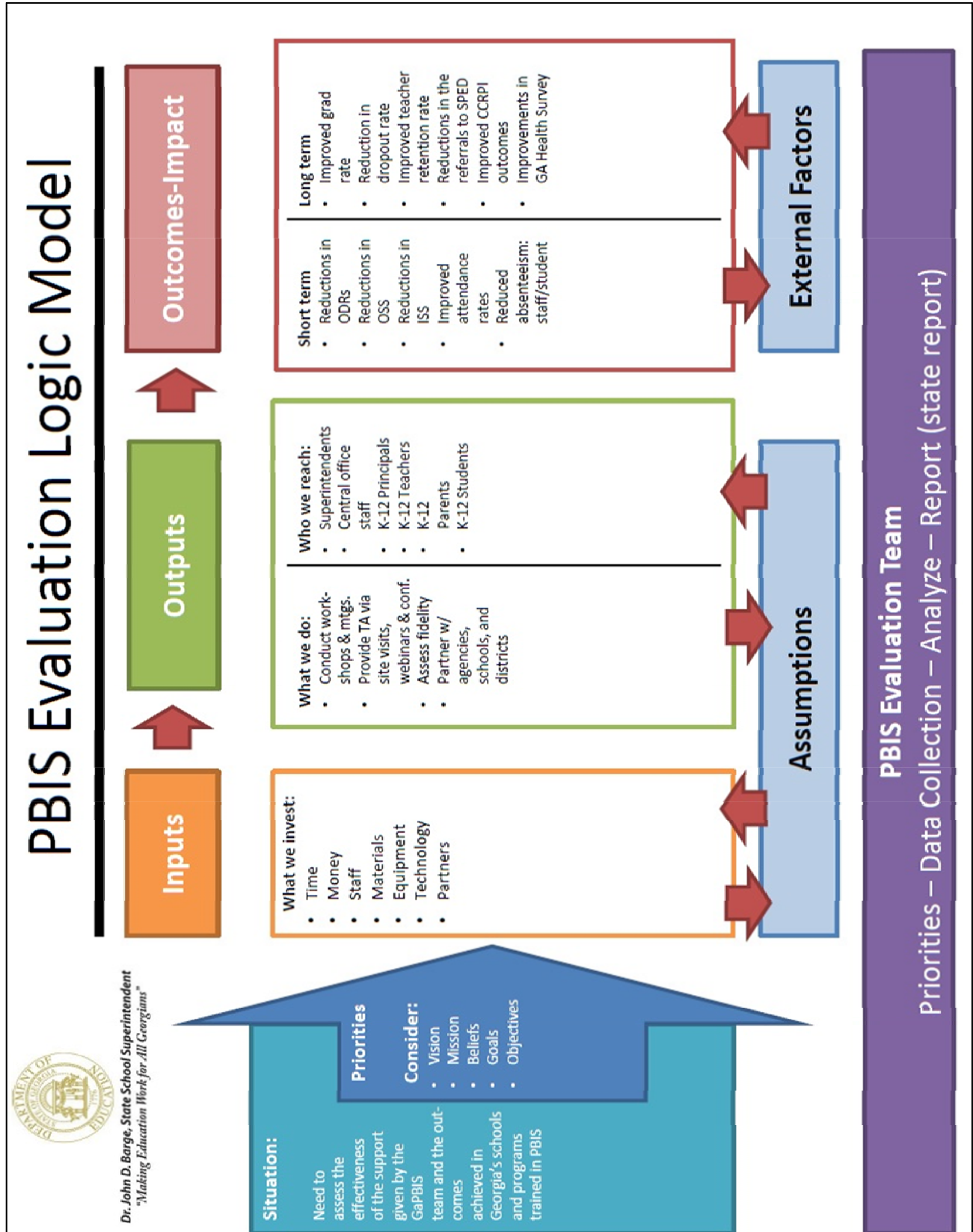
School Wide Information System (SWIS): Web-based software used for gathering, entering, summarizing, reporting, and using office discipline referral information.

Student Support Team (SST): A joint effort of regular and special education to identify and plan alternative instructional strategies for children prior to or in lieu of a special education referral.

Team Implementation Checklist (TIC): Checklist designed to be completed by the PBIS Team to monitor activities for implementation of PBIS in a school.

Youth Development Campus (YDC): Facility that provides secure care, supervision, and treatment to youth who have been committed to the custody of DFF for long-term programs.

Appendix F: Georgia PBIS Evaluation Logic Map



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