

WHAT IS EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS (EBS)?

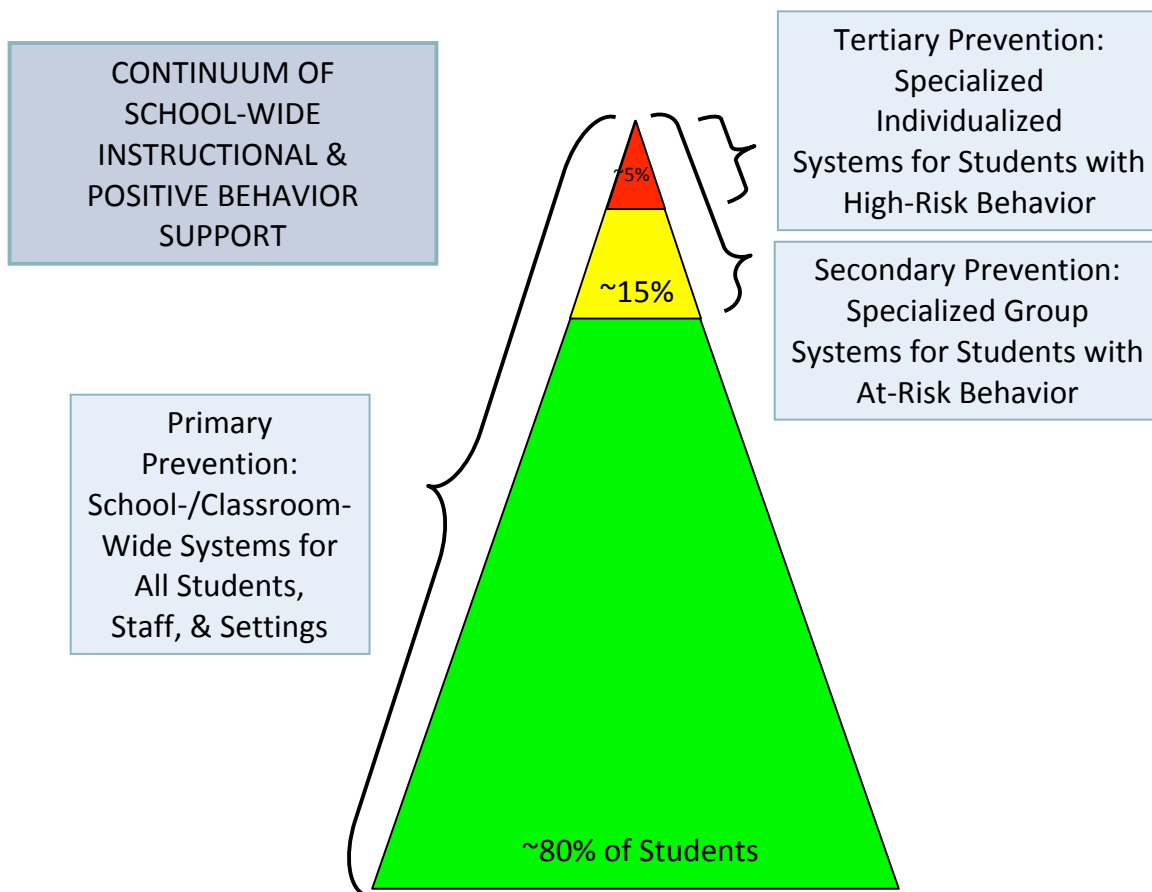
In the past, school discipline has focused mainly on reacting to specific student misbehavior by implementing punishment-based strategies including reprimands, loss of privileges, office referrals, detentions, suspensions, and expulsions. Research has shown that using punishment exclusively, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Teaching, modeling, and reinforcing positive social behavior is an important part of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of school-wide EBS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.

A major advance in school discipline is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior supports for all students within a school is implemented in all areas including classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, cafeterias, restrooms). EBS is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional.

EBS is theorized based on a public health model of prevention/intervention design. The model (see figure 1) posits that if a treatment is effective it must significantly benefit at least 80% of the population, leaving roughly 20% of the population that needs more targeted assistance ("yellow and red zones" of the triangle). For most of this "intervention group," increasing the intensity of the original treatment, or modifying it in a substantial yet efficient manner, will positively affect approximately 15% of the original population (yellow zone); this leaves about 5% of the population that will require something more individualized, intense, and different (red zone).

Applied to the school setting, this model provides a framework for educators to evaluate whether the Core Program (e.g., the "treatment" - using the public health language) for the whole population of the school is effective for at least 80% of the students. If at least 80% of the students are responding appropriately to the school's Core Program, schools should have enough resources to provide moderate to intense interventions for the students that require them. However, if less than 80% of the students in the school are responding to the Core program, EBS teams must investigate the Core program effectiveness, goodness-of-fit, and the adult actions in delivering it. The greater the percentage of students meeting expectations in the Core, the more resources a school has to offer students in need of intervention.

Figure 1



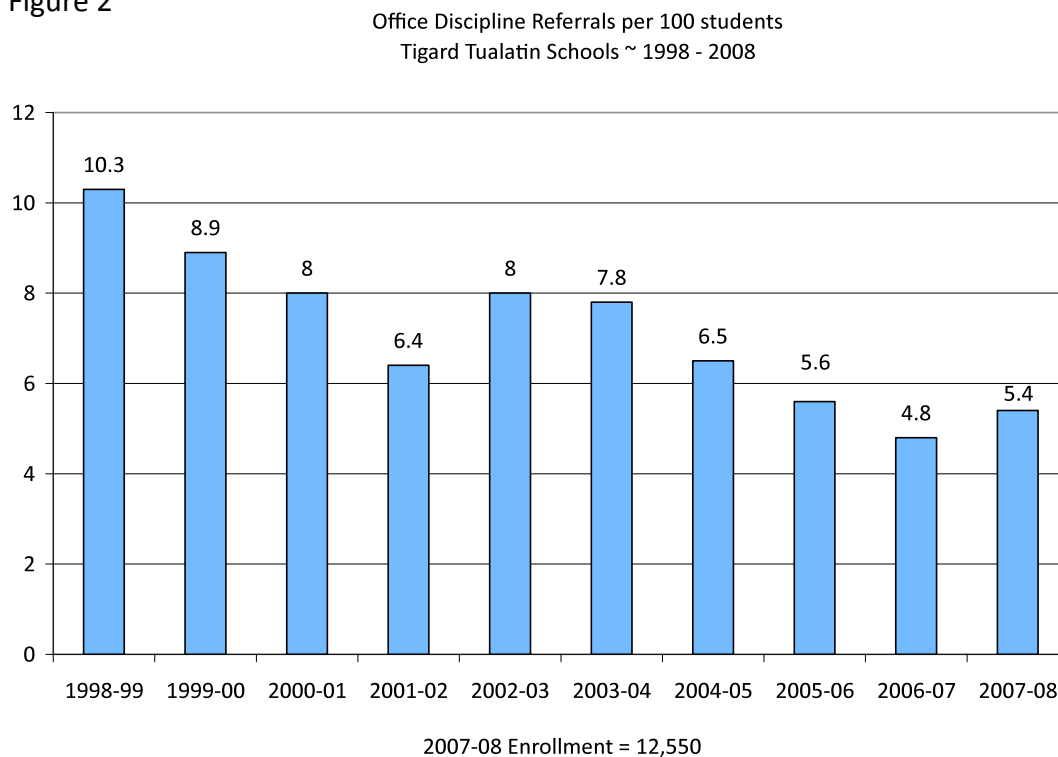
Students requiring more support are identified by school teams using data that investigates whether students are responding to the Core Program. Behavior data includes discipline referrals, attendance, and student survey information. Students identified as needing more support are intervened with using evidence-based practices and their progress closely monitored at regular intervals. Only approximately 5% of the student body will require more intensive, individualized supports if evidence-based programs are implemented with fidelity and in a consistent manner across all settings. These students typically will require ongoing support plans, monitored by highly trained and skilled practitioners at the school. Importantly, in the EBS model, because school-wide data is utilized frequently by EBS teams, students very rarely “fall through the cracks” as the early warning signs (e.g., poor attendance and negative behavior) are investigated for all students at least monthly and interventions planned for any student that is not responding to the Core.

Why Do We Need EBS?

- Problem behavior is the single most common reason why students are removed from regular classrooms. Even though students with extreme problem behavior usually represent only 5-7% of school enrollment, they can account for more than 70% of the time spent by administrators and counselors.

- Harsh punishment and zero tolerance policies have not been effective at either improving behavioral climate in schools, or preventing students with problem behaviors from entering the juvenile justice system.
- Three years after being excluded from school, almost 70% of these youth have been arrested.
- By teaching students the expected behavior, having all adults consistently reinforce it, and having EBS teams use data to design preventative systems at their schools and intervene with at-risk students, the number of incidences of students being sent to the office has declined by nearly 50% over the last 10 years in TTSD (see Figure 2).
 - Estimating that each incident removes students from time in instruction for at least 45 minutes, nearly 250 instructional days per year are saved since implementing EBS in the district.
 - This means students are spending more time learning, administrators are spending more time on instructional matters, and teachers are spending more time teaching content and skills.

Figure 2



As we increase students' time in instructional settings and decrease the amount of time they are away from the classroom due to behavioral difficulties, the district's achievement scores have been on a steady incline. In addition, TTSD is a state-wide and national leader in applying the three-tiered triangle to academics; meaning Core

Programs and interventions for individual students in reading, math, and written language are structured, taught, and evaluated using the same multi-tiered model used for behavior. The combination of behavior and academic program delivery using a three-tiered approach had led to a steady increase in academic outcomes for our students in both reading (see Figures 3 & 4) and math (see Figure 5).

Figure 3
Percent of 3rd Grade TTSD Students Meeting and Exceeding Oregon State Benchmarks ~ Reading

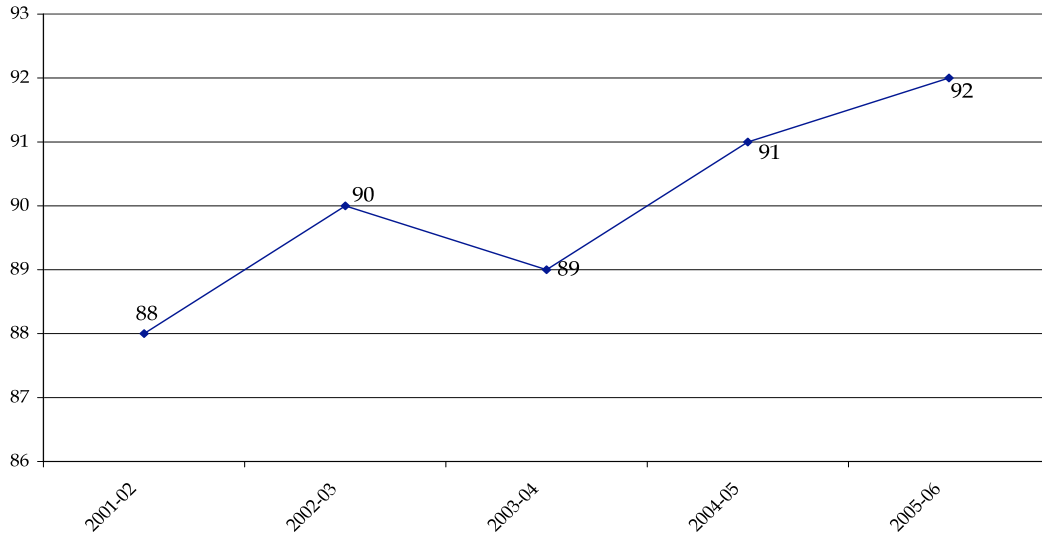


Figure 4
Percent of 5th Grade Students Meeting and Exceeding Oregon State Benchmarks ~ Reading

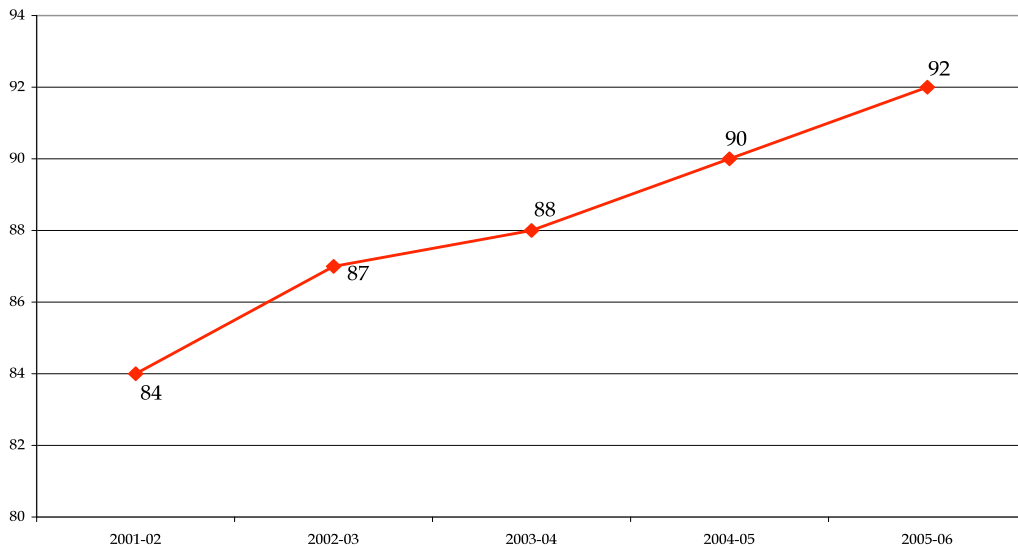
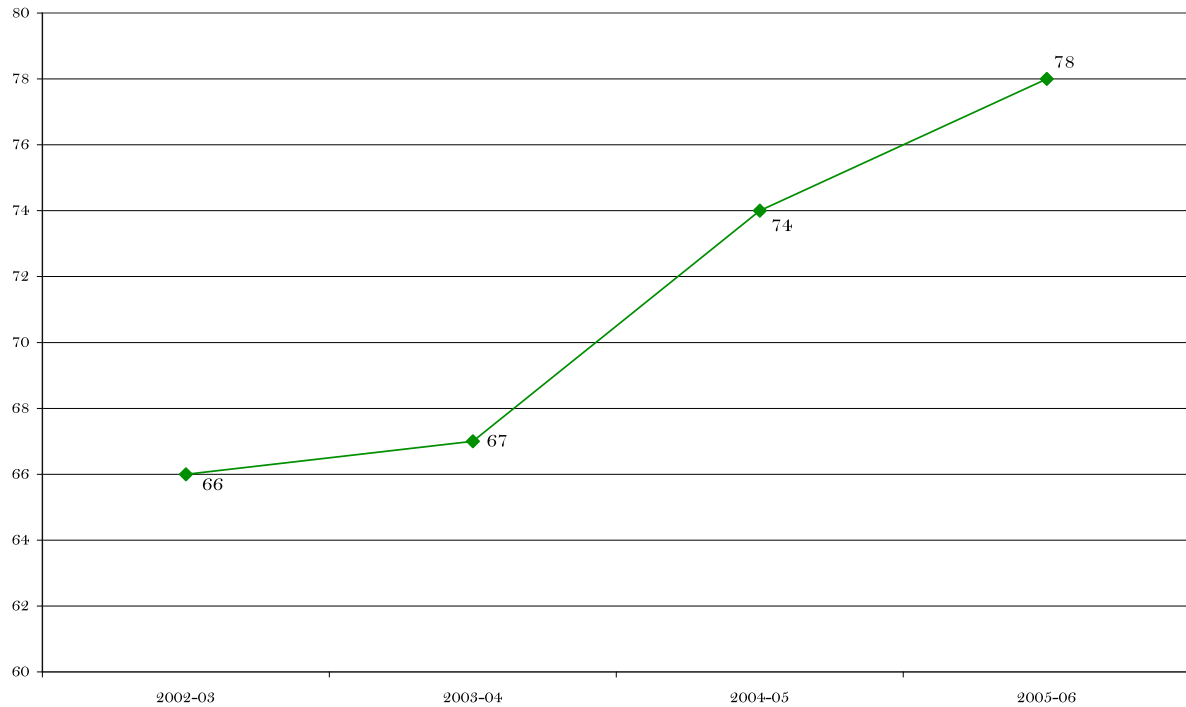


Figure 4

Percent of 8th Grade Students Meeting State Benchmarks ~ Math



In TTSD, the District's 2008-09 Strategic Plan emphasizes the implementation of the EBS/EBIS programs. It is a core value of the district that all students and staffs deserve a safe and effective learning environment, that adults are in charge of teaching students and positive behavior is something that is taught and reinforced, and that schools use data to investigate their effectiveness and to intervene in their programming when appropriate.

All TTSD schools:

1. Have established a school-wide leadership or behavior support team to guide and direct the process. This team is made up of an administrator, counselors, teachers, and support staff.
2. Complete an annual self assessment of the current school-wide discipline system.
3. Are assessed by an outside evaluator to see if all major components of EBS (i.e., students and staff know the school rules; rules are posted, taught, and reinforced; staff know the procedures for behaviors that are managed in the classroom versus referred to the office; and data are used for prevention and intervention planning and implementation).

4. Utilize the School-wide Information System (SWIS) to collect office referral and other data on a regular basis to evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide EBS efforts.
5. Create an annual action plan that is data-based, realistic, and meaningful and aims to increase prosocial behaviors and positive school climate.