

# Highlight: CalTAC - California Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

## What is CalTAC?

**Barbara Kelley:** We are not-for-profit technical assistance center whose sole purpose is to train and support schools and districts who want to implement SWPBIS in their Districts ( [www.pbiscaltac.org](http://www.pbiscaltac.org) ). We are affiliated with the National Center on PBIS located at the University of Oregon that Drs. Horner and Sugai started; the National Center is funded by the Office of Special Education Programming (OSEP) through the federal government. CalTAC was started to provide schools, districts, county office of education and SELPA's with the technical assistance required to implement and scale up PBIS with fidelity, using the National PBIS Implementation and Professional Development Blueprints. CalTAC provides the training and support required for a state-wide PBIS initiative. Currently, California does not have a state-wide PBIS initiative; however there is more of a focus in the state to develop preventative and positive classroom and school-wide practices.

In the last few years, we have been doing contract work with Special Education Local Planning Areas (SELPA's), County Offices of Education, Regions, and Districts. They pay for our services using a variety of different sources, including IDEA and Prop 63 Mental Health Services Act dollars and Program Improvement School Title I funding. There are several examples across the state of districts, counties

and regions "sharing" resources to make this happen for schools and communities. We are available to help any school or district in the state. Our services include training in PBIS using implementation, prevention, systems change and behavioral science. Bully Prevention in PBIS schools and other PBIS Skill-builders are also available as a one or two day stand-alone professional development series providing instruction in a variety of specific skill development areas such as, classroom management, active supervision, responding to problem behaviors, and culturally relevant school-wide and classroom practices.

We hope to expand our ability to provide services through grants, including grants that might come from the National Center. In such circumstances, our services would be at no cost and we would enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the district or school to make certain that it is willing to allocate appropriate resources to scale up and commit to a three to five year plan for implementation and sustainability. PBIS is designed to be cost effective in gaining instructional minutes, lowering suspension/expulsion rates, increasing attendance and academic performance by becoming "the way we do business". It is not an add-on, it is systems change work.

## How many staff do you have?

We have three full time staff members with up to seven additional part-time staff members. We scale up when the need for our services increases.

## Are there any efforts to create a larger-scale effort to spread SWPBIS in California?

Yes, there is a California PBIS Coalition. The California PBIS Coalition began as a group of individuals across the state who were training and supporting schools in scaling up PBIS. The Coalition's mission is to promote safe and positive social cultures in all California school communities. The Coalition will serve in supporting school communities to; share effective practices, provide opportunities for networking and assist in deeper learning and fidelity of PBIS implementation for sustainability.

The group is working on establishing a California SWPBIS conference. The Coalition will help the state by making recommendations on best policies and practices around SWPBIS implementation in California. CalTAC is a member of the California PBIS Coalition and supports with technical assistance in PBIS.

We also just created a contact list by region for individuals who are trained to help facilitate SWPBIS implementation and/or to assist with developing and using SWIS, the data information system that supports SWPBIS. The idea is to ensure that every region in California and every district in California has a person close to them who can provide help or advice and a model site to visit.

Also, if you go to the PBIS.org website and click on the California page, you can find a list of the regional managers related to PBIS.

### **What do you charge when you provide training and technical assistance?**

This is difficult to answer because there are so many variables when scaling up an evidence based practice. However, the average range per year is between \$50-85,000 for a District, County, Region or SELPA. It really depends on what the District, County, Region or SELPA already has in place, and the scaling up plan. We always start with a survey around assets and needs to tailor our training and technical assistance plan and make use of as many existing assets the organization already has in place. The training period runs for 3 years with the goal of making the District, SELPA, or County Office self-sufficient and able to train others at the end of the 3-year period. Building the internal capacity of the organizations we work with is an underlying principal of our professional development plans.

### **How do you work with Districts and County Offices to implement SWPBIS and help them gain the tools to be trainers?**

As an example, we are currently working with Los Angeles County Office of Education. We have a three year implementation plan. We will provide intensive training and support to their staff, while training a model district, so that they can become trainers themselves. In the second year of the process, they will work with and support one or more pilot districts. By the end of the third year, their staff will be leading the effort for those districts and have one or more model sites.

We are also doing this in Monterey. So far, they have been doing tremendous work; the teachers are really incredible and they are already reporting big changes in their discipline and school climate data.

We have been consulting with Orange County Department of Education for several years. Now, they are off and running on their own. With the Dessert Mountain SELPA, we are finishing up our last year, and they are on their fourth cohort of schools. They have seen reductions in office discipline referrals, suspensions and expulsion, and also an increase in teacher satisfaction.

### **Are there free resources on PBIS and how to implement it and evaluate it that schools and districts can access?**

Yes, absolutely. If you go to [www.pbiscaltac.org](http://www.pbiscaltac.org), you will find all of our trainings, implementation blueprints, and evaluation tools. Everything is free and in a format for you to take and use as your own. You will find that true with most PBIS resources, just be sure to give credit to your sources.

### **Does the California Department of Education support the work?**

Not yet, but we hope that we can create partnerships with them going forward so that more Districts with high levels of suspensions can get help and support.

The important thing to remember is that this work is about systems change, which requires changes in attitudes, belief systems, practices, and the entire way of doing business. In order to make this work, our school partners have to be constantly looking at and analyzing data and willing to make continuous change and improvements in practices. It is critical that there is enough freedom for the practitioners to make the changes that are necessary to really move the focus away from punitive responses and out-of-school discipline and onto strategies that work for ALL children and keep them in the classroom and learning. While PBIS provides the *framework* for implementation, it must be embedded in the context of the local environment. This requires flexibility and continuous growth in establishing this data for decision making model that uses evidence-based practices and systems to support teachers in the implementation of preventative and positive systemic practices.

### **How do you all measure success?**

If you go to the PBISassessment.org website, you will find all of the tools that we use to evaluate implementation, assess fidelity with the model, and track the progress of the Organization in scaling up an evidence-based practice. The evaluation tools include: the School-wide Assessment Survey (annual survey by all stakeholders in features of PBIS), the Team Implementation Checklist (self-administered survey), Benchmarks of Quality (annual benchmarking of School-wide practices), the Early Childhood Benchmark of Quality (annual benchmarking of pre-school practices), the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (outside evaluation of school-wide practices), the Benchmark of Advanced Tiers (annual benchmarking of Tier II and III practices), the Monitoring of Advanced Tiers Tool ( allows teams to monitor progress of the advanced tier practices) the School Safety Survey (stakeholder survey of the perception of school safety), and the Intensive School-wide Evaluation Tool (outside evaluation of advance tier practices).

Organizations are also required to assess student outcome data. Typically these measures are Office Discipline Referrals (ODR's), Suspension/Expulsion rates, Attendance, Tardies, Academic Achievement Measures, and other contextually relevant data. The

School-wide Information System (SWIS) is a web-based information system for gathering, entering, summarizing, reporting and using office referral information which supports schools in using behavioral data for progress monitoring and decision making at the school-wide, small group and individual student level. Student behavioral outcome data must be current, highly efficient, locally controlled, formatted for decision-making (graphs), continuously available, confidential and secure.

In addition, at PBIS.org, you will find the implementation, professional development, and scaling-up blueprints, which we use with all of our school partners. To be a SWPBIS school, you must collect office discipline referral information through SWIS or your own district-wide database and fidelity of implementation data (are we doing what we said we would do and does it follow the evidence-based practice). This data is to be regularly analyzed and used for decision making. The data must be relevant, current, and readily available to the PBIS team.

### **Feel Free To Contact Us:**

California Technical Assistance Center Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

Barbara Kelley

Office: 949-933-5248

Email: [BarbaraKelley.Caltac@gmail.com](mailto:BarbaraKelley.Caltac@gmail.com)