Winter 2020-21 PBIS Training & Implementation Fidelity Updates
Summary of Results from Cohorts 15 and 16
May 2021

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based approach to addressing behavior issues in schools. Typically, the Minnesota Department of Education and the Regional Training Projects sponsor three training sessions per year for schools that are participating in Minnesota's two-year training sequence for PBIS. However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic, the Minnesota State Leadership Team (SLT) modified PBIS training to align with individual school changes in learning plans (i.e. distance learning, hybrid, or in-person).

This report summarizes training survey results for both of these types of training and their implementation fidelity measurement for Winter 2020-21. School teams are comprised of school staff members and administrators. Participating school teams complete one survey per team at each training. This report summarizes the results for:

> More information about PBIS in Minnesota can be found at: www.pbismn.org.

- 70 school teams that are in their second year of training (Cohort 15)
- 53 school teams are in their first year of training (Cohort 16)

Training attendance

In non-pandemic times, schools in their first year of training (Cohort 16 in 2020-22) receive two days of training at each of three points during the year, and schools in their second year of training (Cohort 15 in 2019-21) receive one day at each of three points during the year. For Winter 2020-2021 training, school teams could choose between either of these PBIS training delivery methods:

- Live training: school teams could attend a live training using a virtual platform over the course of one or two days, depending on which cohort their school is a part of, or,
- Asynchronous training: school teams watched PBIS training videos, met virtually with coaches, and completed other various tasks over the course of six weeks (though some schools needed more time).

Training surveys were administered based on type of training method selected by school teams. As this differs from Fall 2020 and previous school years where training was held in-person or only via a live, virtual platform, this shift should be considered when interpreting results and comparing data across years. School teams are required to attend training. Staff and trainers at the Regional Implementation Projects (RIPs) keep track of team attendance and administrator attendance at training, however this was difficult to do this year as all training was administered online. Administrator attendance is recommended, and their attendance is monitored as a potential indicator of buy-in to the school's PBIS initiative.

A total of 30 school teams from both cohorts completed a survey for the live training and 20 school teams completed an end-point training survey for the asynchronous training. Note that there were two surveys for the asynchronous training: one survey at the midpoint and another one at the end. After the RIPs received feedback from school teams that they were overwhelmed with the number of surveys they needed to complete and low participation in the mid-point asynchronous survey, the midpoint survey was closed and schools were no longer encouraged to complete it.

Figure 1 below illustrates the number of school teams who completed training surveys based on region, cohort, and training method. Six school teams from Cohort 15 and one school team from Cohort 16 completed both a mid-point

and end-point survey for the asynchronous training; these are included in the number of responses for each type of training survey. The overall response rate for the winter training surveys was very low compared with other years. Given the ongoing pandemic and the shift in training delivery methods, this is not unexpected. Due to this low participation rate, training survey results are not disaggregated by region.

1. Winter 2020-2021 survey responses from school teams by cohort and region (N=number of schools in training)

	Cohort 15			Cohort 16		
	Metro (N=16)	**North* (N=38)**	**South (N=15)**	**Metro (N=22)**	**North (N=16)**	**South (N=14)**
Live training	3	4	8	7	5	3
Asynchronous training--Midpoint	7	4	2	3	1	--
Asynchronous training—end point	2	6	5	--	3	4

Overall satisfaction with training

School teams were asked to indicate how useful the training was in helping their team implement PBIS at their school sites. Key findings include:

‣ Most school teams that completed the survey said winter 2020 training was very useful or somewhat useful (Figure 2).

‣ A few school teams in Cohort 15 indicated winter 2020 training was not very useful.

2. School team ratings: "Overall, how useful was this PBIS training in terms of helping your team to implement PBIS in your school?"

	Cohort 15		Cohort 16	
	Live (N=15)	**End-point Asynchronous (N=12)**	**Live (N=15)**	**End-point Asynchronous (N=7)**
Very useful	10	1	5	4
Somewhat useful	4	9	10	3
Not very useful	1	2	--	--
Not at all useful	--	--	--	--

Note. This question was not asked on the mid-point survey.

Action planning

Cohort 15 and 16 school teams that participated in either type of training format were asked to list three action planning items their school has been working on the most since Fall 2020 training. Cohort 16 school teams that completed the asynchronous training were not asked about their action planning items. Key findings include:

‣ The most common action planning items listed by Cohort 15 school teams included acknowledgements and recognition, data, and updating their PBIS matrix (Figure 3).

▸ Half of school teams from Cohort 16 that participated in the live training reported they are working on major and minor behaviors as part of their PBIS action plan (Figure 4).

3. Action planning items identified by school teams—Cohort 15

	Cohort 15	
	Live (N=15)	End-point Asynchronous (N=12)
Acknowledgements/Recognition	6	8
Buy-in (staff & student motivation)	5	--
Data/using data	4	8
Expectations (teaching/student)	5	--
Family/community involvement	5	3
Matrix	6	5

Note: Other less commonly mentioned action planning items include: accommodations for distance learning, artifacts, professional development, SEL/trauma informed PBIS, training school staff, and tier 2 and 3 interventions.

4. Top action planning items identified by school teams—Cohort 16

	Cohort 16 Live (N=14)
Behavior/Majors & Minors	7
Family & community involvement	6
Flowchart	4
Matrix	4

Notes: Cohort 16 school teams that participated in the asynchronous training were not asked about their action planning items.
Other less commonly mentioned action planning items include: feedback and acknowledgement, and using data.

Most useful training components

School teams from both cohorts were asked in the open-ended format what parts of the live and asynchronous trainings were the most useful for their PBIS teams.

School teams from Cohort 16 that participated in either the live training or the asynchronous training said that **work time (n=11), coaching and supportive facilitators (n=9), and examples of key PBIS components (n=7) were the most useful parts of training.** Below are some of their comments, edited for clarity:

Work time as a team was incredibly helpful. Our external coach, was very helpful at guiding us--she made statements that helped clarify our thinking. She helped us with our timeline. She was very supportive.

We liked all the PowerPoint slides that we can use or go back to as a resource. The website is also amazing for our coach to access our materials. All the tangible resources were fantastic and so helpful. Having our coach in our group chat was also great for clarification and resource purposes.

We benefited from hearing more about different acknowledgment systems as well as different forms for behavior referrals.

Similarly, most school teams from Cohort 15 stated that **work time (n=13) was the most useful part about training**. Three teams that participated in the live training noted that they appreciated the **breakout sessions**. Team members from two schools that participated in the asynchronous training noted that they appreciated **the ideas and engagement from other schools**. Two other school teams that participated in the asynchronous training mentioned **using and engaging with data**. Below are some of their comments, edited for clarity:

Work time and hearing from other schools that we are in the same boat with them about issues we are experiencing.

In our breakout time with our team, we were able to discuss topics that we felt were important to for our school.

The suggestions about incentives and engagement from other districts were helpful.

The training prompted us to think more about our data.

Areas for improvement

School teams were also asked what they would improve about Winter 2020 training to help their PBIS teams. Six school teams in Cohort 15 that participated in the live training had suggestions around **training format and timing**, while three teams suggested that **trainers provide more examples of how to implement PBIS in their school.**

We need examples of how to translate PBIS stuff to online and hybrid.

We'd like suggestions for how to work around challenges with implementation at school. We're running into a lot of roadblocks with how to actually put anything into action.

Start training earlier and end it earlier. We need more time to view videos and complete worksheets.

We'd like more time. Things seemed a little jam packed. It makes sense that they are fitting in two days in one day, but it almost seemed rushed.

Four school teams in Cohort 15 and one school team in Cohort 16 that participated in the asynchronous training said they would **prefer to hold in-person training**, though some acknowledged that is not possible currently due to the pandemic.

We'd prefer full day trainings like normal to get away from the school building and focus on PBIS implementation. We have to deal with a lot of distractions when we're in the school building.

It's too hard to be together with Covid, but we got more out of our in-person trainings.

If we were able to meet in person. I feel that it would be very beneficial for our team to get to work with the facilitators in person. (I know that is not possible due to our worldwide pandemic right now).

Six school teams that participated in either the live training or the asynchronous training in Cohort 16 said they were **overwhelmed by the amount of content, action planning steps, and longer presentations.**

I feel like the amount of material that we got was overwhelming, it was hard to know where to start. We didn't know exactly what we should be working on at any given time.

The full day is tough to sit through - there's so many action items as well, and it becomes overwhelming. There's no time to implement things before coming back and learning more.

Five school teams in both cohorts that participated in either the live or asynchronous training model noted that **their school was struggling with PBIS training due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic**:

It is just a hard year with Covid-19 and switching models. Our brains are at capacity and our staff are overwhelmed.

I cannot identify one thing that would be more beneficial, I believe the [asynchronous] format would have been more beneficial had we not already been trying to juggle different learning formats throughout the training period. At times, it felt like one extra responsibility.

We had a difficult time getting our entire team together for trainings due to COVID-related issues. It was extremely helpful to have the online modules as an option.

Ratings of training effectiveness

School teams that attended the live training were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with eight statements about the effectiveness of the trainings. These statements included whether or not the training content was clearly presented, if the training enhanced their understanding of PBIS, if the training content will assist PBIS implementation in their school, and whether or not they are confident to share the topics they learned at training with other school staff. Schools were also asked about PBIS team members' confidence in their ability to share implementation fidelity and outcome data with other school staff. Since PBIS training was moved to an online format, school teams who participated in the live training were asked about the extent they understood concepts in the online training format as well as technical difficulties. Some key findings include:

‣ Most school teams from both cohorts that participated in the live training either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that the training content was presented clearly, the training content will improve PBIS practices in their schools, and that they are confident in sharing topics learned at training with other school staff (Figure 5). Some school teams from Cohort 15 disagreed that the training enhanced their understanding of PBIS.

‣ More school teams from Cohort 16 said they somewhat agreed that the training content was clearly presented and that they are confident in their ability to share what they learned at PBIS training with other school staff.

‣ A few school teams from Cohort 16 disagreed they were confident to share either implementation fidelity or outcome data. Similarly, a few school teams from Cohort 16 also indicated they struggled with technical difficulties during training and they had trouble understanding PBIS training concepts in the online format.

5. Ratings of training effectiveness: Live training

	Cohort 15 (N=14)	Cohort 16 (N=15)
The training content was clearly presented.		
Strongly agree	8	5
Somewhat agree	6	9
Somewhat disagree	--	1
Strongly disagree	--	--
The training enhanced our team members' understanding of PBIS.		
Strongly agree	4	8
Somewhat agree	6	7
Somewhat disagree	4	--
Strongly disagree	--	--

5. **Ratings of training effectiveness: Live training (continued)**

	Cohort 15 (N=14)	Cohort 16 (N=15)
The training content will improve PBIS practices in our school.		
Strongly agree	6	11
Somewhat agree	8	4
Somewhat disagree	--	--
Strongly disagree	--	--
We are confident in our ability to share the topics we learned today with other school staff.		
Strongly agree	9	5
Somewhat agree	5	9
Somewhat disagree	--	1
Strongly disagree	--	--
We are confident in our ability to share implementation fidelity data (i.e., SAS, TFI) with other school staff.		
Strongly agree	10	3
Somewhat agree	4	7
Somewhat disagree	--	5
Strongly disagree	--	--
We are confident in our ability to share outcome data (e.g., office discipline referrals, or ODR) with other school staff.		
Strongly agree	9	5
Somewhat agree	3	6
Somewhat disagree	2	3
Strongly disagree	--	1
We were able to understand the concepts and learning modules in the online training format.		
Strongly agree	9	9
Somewhat agree	5	3
Somewhat disagree	--	3
Strongly disagree	--	--
Our team had no trouble/technical difficulties with the online training format.		
Strongly agree	10	7
Somewhat agree	4	5
Somewhat disagree	--	2
Strongly disagree	--	1

School teams that completed the asynchronous training were also asked how strongly they agreed whether the training tasks and expectations were easy to understand, whether they were able to understand the concepts and training models in the asynchronous format, and whether or not their school experienced technical difficulties with the asynchronous format. Key findings include:

▸ Most school teams from both cohorts that participated in the asynchronous training agreed training tasks and expectations were easy to understand, that they were able understand the concepts and learning models in the asynchronous format, and that they did not have any trouble or technical difficulties with the asynchronous format (Figure 6). However, more schools in Cohort 16 noted that they only "somewhat agreed" that they were able to understand the concepts and learning modules in the asynchronous training format.

6. Ratings of training effectiveness: Asynchronous training

	Cohort 15 (N=12)	Cohort 16 (N=7)
Our training tasks and expectations were easy to understand.		
Strongly agree	7	3
Somewhat agree	5	3
Somewhat disagree	--	1
Strongly disagree	--	--
We were able to understand the concepts and learning modules in the asynchronous training format.		
Strongly agree	6	2
Somewhat agree	6	5
Somewhat disagree	--	--
Strongly disagree	--	--
Our team had no trouble/technical difficulties with the asynchronous format.		
Strongly agree	7	4
Somewhat agree	5	3
Somewhat disagree	--	--
Strongly disagree	--	--

NOTE: Results above are from the end-point asynchronous training survey only.

Acknowledgements and feedback

School teams from Cohort 15 and 16 that participated in the asynchronous training were asked if they were using acknowledgements this year for PBIS. If school teams said they were using acknowledgements this year, they were asked how acknowledgements are being delivered to students. **Ten out of 12 schools from Cohort 15 and 3 out of 7 schools from Cohort 16 said they are using acknowledgements this year. Of those that said they are using acknowledgements, most school teams from Cohort 15 (n=8) and Cohort 16 (n=3) said they are delivering these acknowledgements to students in both an online and virtual format.**

Tiered Fidelity Inventory

The PBIS State Leadership Team expects that school teams in their first year of training (Cohort 16) will score at least 40% on their Tier 1 TFI at winter training. As it is their second year of training, Cohort 15 school teams are expected to meet the 70% implementation fidelity benchmark at winter training. Some key findings from the winter 2020 TFI assessments include:

> The TFI measures implementation fidelity for each of the three tiers of PBIS. It is designed to be taken three times per year while a school team is in training. In Minnesota, schools complete a TFI at each PBIS training. Some schools also completed a "walk-through" to interview staff and students in addition to completing the TFI facilitation session. Schools in training are currently only taking the Tier 1 portion of the TFI assessment. In order to be implementing PBIS with fidelity, a school needs to score 70 percent or better for each of the three tiers of PBIS.

- **The overall average Tier 1 TFI scores for Cohorts 15 increased by 12 percentage points since fall 2020, and the overall average for Cohort 16 has increased by 16 percentage points since fall 2020** (Figure 7).

- **Despite the increase in average scores from fall to winter 2020, the number of school teams that completed a TFI decreased.** Sixty-six percent (46 out of 70) Cohort 15 school teams completed a TFI in winter 2020 compared with 80% (n=56) in fall 2020. For Cohort 16, 71% (38 out of 53) school teams completed a TFI during the same time period compared with 94% (n=50) of school teams that completed a TFI in Fall 2020.

- The average score for all teams was 66% for Cohort 15, which was below the 70% winter benchmark for schools in year two of training. On average, school teams in Cohort 15 from the South region are implementing PBIS with fidelity according to their TFI scores, while school teams from the North and Metro fell just below this threshold.

- Cohort 16 school teams across the state had an average tier 1 TFI score of 41%. School teams from the North and South region, on average, exceeded the winter training benchmark (40%), while the Metro region was slightly below (Figure 8).

7. Average Tier 1 TFI scores by region—Cohort 15 (Fall 2019 through Winter 2020)

■ Fall 2019   ■ Winter 2019   ■ Spring/End of Year 2020   ■ Fall 2020   ■ Winter 2020
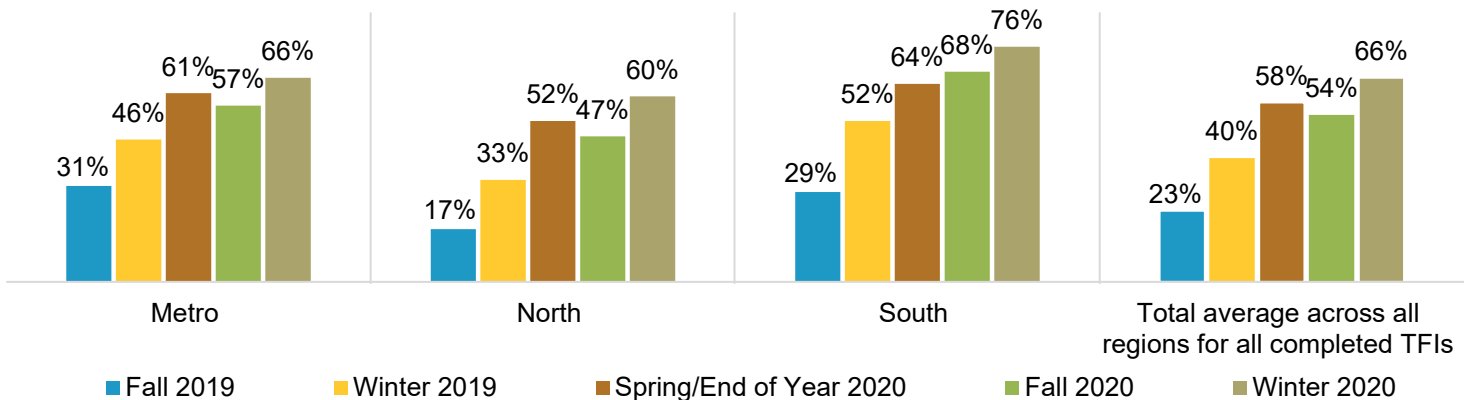
*Total is the average across all regions for all completed TFIs

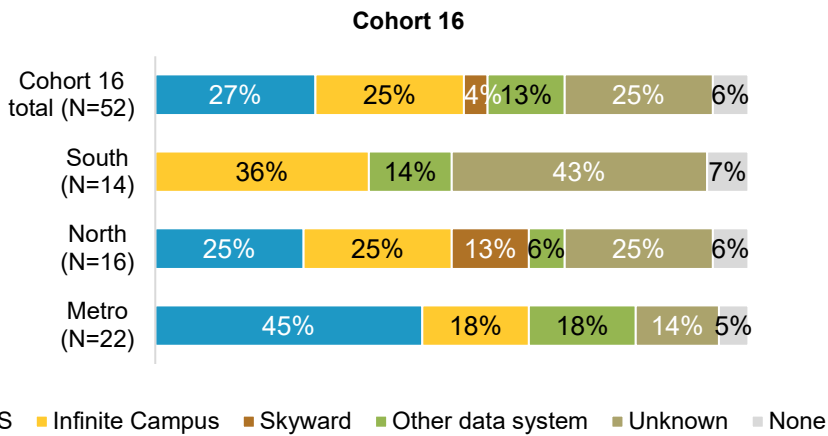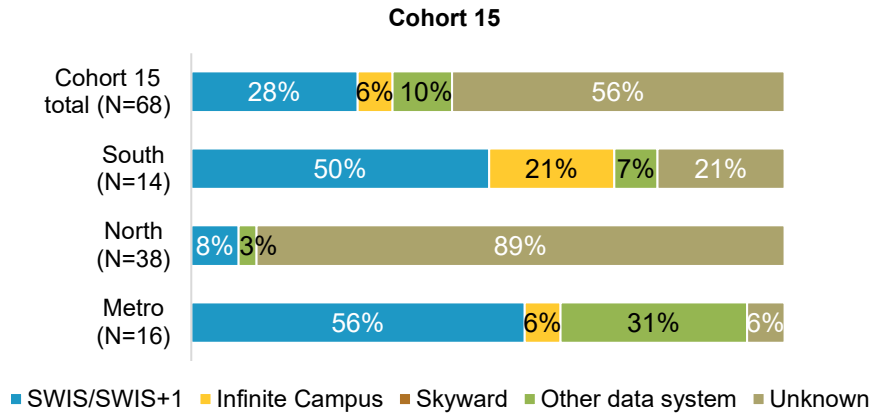**8. Average Tier 1 TFI scores by region—Cohort 16 (Fall & Winter 2020)**

■ Fall 2020   ■ Winter 2020
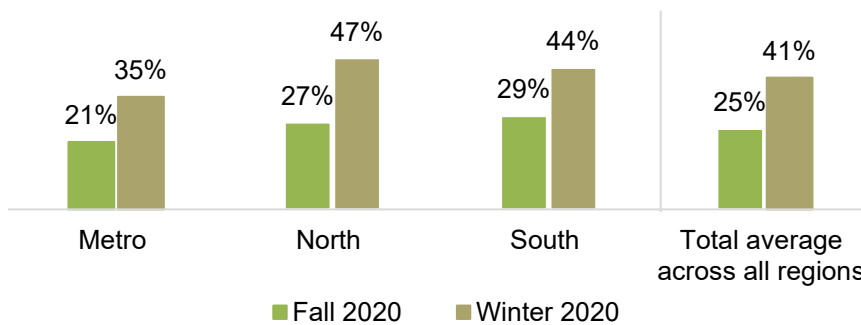
*Total is the average across all regions for all completed TFIs

Behavioral data system

School teams were asked to identify which ODR data system(s) they use to track data. Schools are expected to have an established behavior system in place by winter training in their first year. Some key findings include:

▸ Most schools from the Metro and South regions in Cohort 15 report that they have a behavioral data system in place. For most schools from the North region (89%), it is unknown whether they have a data system in place (Figure 9).

▸ The majority of schools from the Metro and North regions in Cohort 16 have a data system in place. Half (43%) of school teams from the South region either do not have a data system or it is unknown what type of data system they use to track ODR data.

▸ The high number of school teams with an unknown data system could be attributed to a few factors. First, there was a low response rate for the winter training survey, which is when school teams are asked which data system they are using. Second, school teams may not have updated this information when asked to do so in the Wilder Research database. Third, school teams have indicated on the Winter 2020 training survey in several of the open-ended questions they are overwhelmed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and therefore are perhaps not as engaged with their PBIS initiatives (or tracking data).

9. Schools with behavioral data system, Cohorts 15 & 16

Cohort 15

	SWIS/SWIS+1	Infinite Campus	Skyward	Other data system	Unknown
Cohort 15 total (N=68)	28%	6%		10%	56%
South (N=14)	50%	21%	7%		21%
North (N=38)	8%			3%	89%
Metro (N=16)	56%	6%		31%	6%

■ SWIS/SWIS+1 ■ Infinite Campus ■ Skyward ■ Other data system ■ Unknown

Cohort 16

	SWIS	Infinite Campus	Skyward	Other data system	Unknown	None
Cohort 16 total (N=52)	27%	25%	4%	13%	25%	6%
South (N=14)		36%		14%	43%	7%
North (N=16)	25%	25%	13%	6%	25%	6%
Metro (N=22)	45%	18%		18%	14%	5%

■ SWIS ■ Infinite Campus ■ Skyward ■ Other data system ■ Unknown ■ None

Note. Numbers may not equal 100% due to rounding.

The presence of a **behavioral data system** allows for schools to track office discipline referral (ODR) data and use this for data-based decision-making. ODR data includes whether the problem behavior, locations, possible motivations, others involved, and administrative consequences. The data collected in these systems are used for improving school-wide behavior support.

Challenges for sharing key data with school staff

School teams were asked about the challenges associated with sharing PBIS implementation fidelity with other school staff. School teams in Cohort 15 and Cohort 16 said they had difficulty sharing this data due to **lack of time and pandemic-related reasons**:

We just haven't had time - we've been dealing with other more pressing concerns.

There are no challenges in presenting the data, the challenge comes in regards to there being enough time to fully cover the data with all of the other information that needs to be covered in meetings with the ever-changing learning models.

The uncertainty of this year was the biggest hurdle; under normal circumstances, we didn't have any issues.

We have not shared TFI data with other school staff. At this time, most of our whole staff meetings have addressed issues surrounding our learning modules and updates to COVID related processes.

We have not shared this data because we have not be able to meet school-wide (in person) to discuss the data.

Additional knowledge and skills needed to implement PBIS

School teams from both cohorts were invited to provide open-ended, general comments about PBIS training and additional knowledge and skills needed to help with PBIS implementation. Four school teams in Cohort 15 said they would like **more suggestions regarding PBIS and distance or hybrid learning.** Three school teams in Cohort 15 indicated **ongoing difficulties with PBIS implementation due to the pandemic**. Three other school teams mentioned they need **more time**. Below are some comments, edited for clarity:

We would like more ideas for implementing PBIS virtually and creative ways to implement positive ways to reinforce students and school-wide celebrations.

It's still very difficult to plan [for our PBIS initiative] due to uncertainty of the future - distance learning? Hybrid? In-Person?

We need to get together as a team and discuss our goals and carry out our plan.

I believe this [asynchronous] format would have been incredibly helpful in a typical year (when we could meet in person as a team), however the challenges this year was the separation, and the juggling of the other responsibilities related to distance learning and navigating schedules.

We'd like more time to work with our team and see what an informal TFI walk-through for our school would look like.

When asked about specific knowledge or skills that they need to implement PBIS in their schools, five school teams in Cohort 16 indicated they wanted **more help with data**. Four school teams mentioned they needed **more time**. Two said they would like **continued external support and training**. Below are some comments, edited for clarity:

We would like a third year of cohort support.

At this time, we need more time to work on our action planning goals.

We would like any examples, ideas of data gathering and a quicker way of do so, and in addition to models that exist to help with the action planning goals at our school would be helpful.

Issues to consider

The PBIS State Leadership Team (SLT), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), and the Regional Implementation Projects (RIPs), should consider the following in order to improve training survey participation, usefulness, and outcomes for schools participating in the two-year cohort training sequence.

Consider an alternative way to track participation for school teams who participate in the asynchronous model.

In a typical year, school team and administrator training attendance is tracked. However, given the changes in training delivery formats, attendance data was difficult to track (especially for asynchronous training). If the asynchronous model is used for future trainings, the SLT and RIPs should consider other methods for measuring participation for school teams that use this format. These could include completing certain tasks or benchmarks within a specific time frame and meeting with an external coach to get more support and guidance on each of these tasks (as well as to provide accountability to the school teams for completion).

Follow up with schools that do not complete the training surveys and consider asking one team representative to complete the survey.

Training survey participation was low for Winter 2020 training compared with other trainings in previous years. Very few school teams completed an asynchronous training survey. This could be due to "low bandwidth" from PBIS team members given the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the ever-changing circumstances schools face with their learning models. Instead of an online survey at the completion of the asynchronous training, perhaps external coaches and trainers could ask 3-4 questions at the end of their coaching sessions to get feedback and perceptions of training.

Consider extra support for school teams that began their first year of training during the pandemic.

Cohort 16 school teams that began training during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic seemed to have a harder time getting the most out of PBIS training. Over half of Cohort 16 school teams that attended either the live or asynchronous trainings rated the training overall to be somewhat useful. More Cohort 16 teams only somewhat agreed that they were able to understand concepts and learning modules in the asynchronous training format. Similarly, a slightly greater number of school teams from Cohort 16 somewhat agreed the training content was clearly presented and that they are confident in their ability to share what they learned at PBIS training with other school staff. RIPs and trainers should consider extra supports for Cohort 16 school teams to be sure they are getting the most out of training and are fully understanding PBIS training concepts. One person from a school team suggested that offering another year of PBIS cohort training could be helpful for school teams.

Continue to meet schools where they are at regarding their PBIS initiatives and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

School teams in both cohorts mentioned that they are overwhelmed, prioritizing other things, and struggling in general due to the ongoing pandemic. RIPs have made accommodations regarding PBIS training (offering an asynchronous and live online formats) and have continued to support schools in a variety of ways throughout the pandemic. The SLT and RIPs should continue to think about ways to support schools that have gone through PBIS training during the pandemic. School teams suggested the need for ongoing coaching, and perhaps a third year of cohort training—MDE and RIPs should consider these options given the circumstances of schools that were in cohort training during the pandemic. The RIPs and MDE should also consider debriefing what worked, and what did not during the pandemic in order to document lessons learned for future use.