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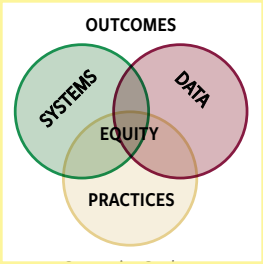
STUDENT AND FAMILY SUPPORT THROUGH PBIS CAN SAVE BILLIONS OF LEA DOLLARS IN MASSACHUSETTS

IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR ALL STUDENTS



The implementation of MTSS/PBIS *with fidelity*[1] has been shown to improve educational outcomes,[2] particularly for students with disabilities (SWD),[3] when comparing schools that achieved fidelity to those that have not. In addition, PBIS is the only approach documented in the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) and its amendments for reducing exclusion, improving educational outcomes, and addressing behavior support needs of SWD.

SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL SAVINGS

Multiple analyses have shown that PBIS saves money.[4] In one study, for every dollar spent on PBIS implementation, there was $105 in savings from reduced school dropout.[5]

MASSACHUSETTS OUT-OF-DISTRICT PLACEMENT REDUCTIONS

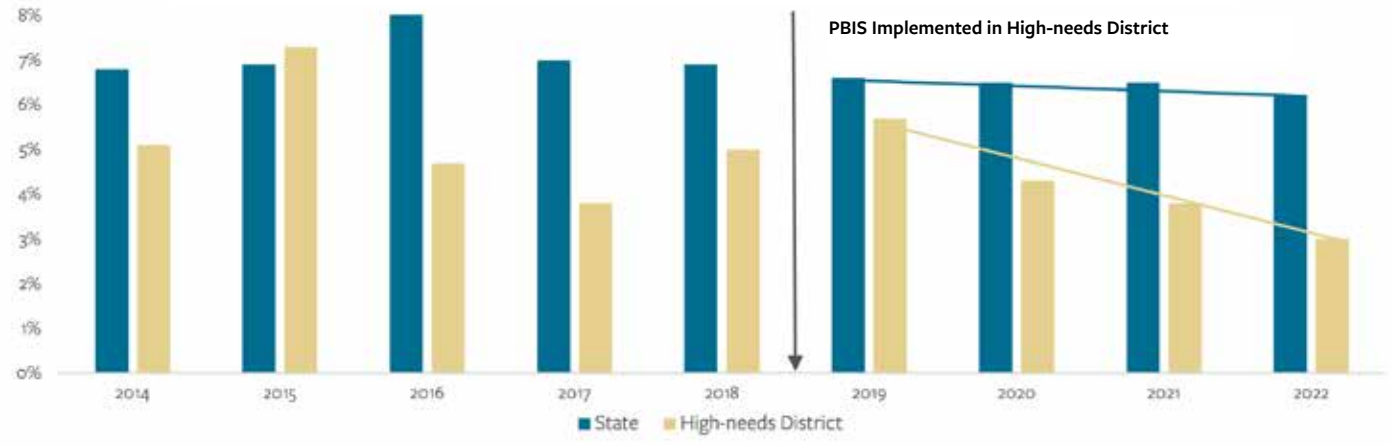
For the past 10 years, a high-needs school district in Massachusetts received technical assistance (TA) on preventing out-of-district placements (ODP). Over the past three years (see Figure), the district prioritized the full implementation of MTSS/PBIS across all tiers, measured by a validated fidelity tool. The rate of students placed in ODP from the district was compared to the average rate of ODPs from all LEAs across the state.

This district showed a significantly decelerating ODP rate over the past three years. Additionally, when comparing the amount of state and federal grant funds used to provide TA to this district, it was found that **for every dollar spent on PBIS technical assistance, the district retained approximately $20 in funds**.

If all LEAs in the state had placed students at the same rate as this district, **LEAs in Massachusetts would have saved approximately $2.5 billion and, over the last three years alone, almost $1.5 billion**. These results are similar to those found in a study by Putnam et al. 2002.[6]

Implementation of PBIS also showed an increase in inclusion, improvement in overall student behavioral health status, including students with internalizing disorders, and improved staff retention.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN SEPARATE SEGREGATED PLACEMENTS



[Over]

1] Center for PBIS (2019). PBIS Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI). https://www.pbis.org/resource/tfi

2] Santiago-Rosario, M. R., McIntosh, K., Izzard, S., Cohen-Lissman, D., & Calhoun, T. E. (2023). *Is Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) an evidence-based practice?* Center on PBIS. https://www.pbis.org/resource/is-school-wide-positive-behavior-support-an-evidence-based-practice

3] Center for PBIS. (2024). PBIS Supports Students with Disabilities. https://www.pbis.org/resource/pbis-supports-students-with-disabilities

4] Bradshaw, C. P., Linwdstrom Johnson, S., Zhu, Y., & Pas, E. T. (2021). Scaling up behavioral health promotion efforts in Maryland: The economic benefit of positive behavioral interventions and supports. *School Psychology Review, 50*(1), 99–109. https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966X.2020.1823797

5] Swain-Bradway, J., Lindstrom Johnson, S., Bradshaw, C., & McIntosh, K. (2017). *What are the economic costs of implementing SWPBIS in comparison to the benefts from reducing suspensions?* Center on PBIS. https://www.pbis.org/resource/what-are-the-economic-costs-of-implementing-swpbis-in-comparison-to-the-benefits-from-reducing-suspensions

6] Putnam, R.F., Luiselli, J.K., Sennett, K. & Malonson, J. (2002). Cost-efficacy analysis of out-of-district special education placements: An evaluative measure of behavior support intervention in public schools. *Journal of Special Education Leadership, 15*, 17-24.

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May Institute is a nonprofit organization that is a national leader in the field of applied behavior analysis and evidence-based interventions, serving autistic individuals and individuals with other developmental disabilities, brain injury, neurobehavioral disorders, and other special needs. Founded nearly 70 years ago, we provide a wide range of exceptional educational and rehabilitative services across the lifespan.

For more than 20 years, May Institute has been a national partner to the National Technical Assistance Center for PBIS. The Center has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education for the last 25 years to research and effectively disseminate the systems, data, and practices that are critically important in the implementation of MTSS/PBIS.

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