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Positive Behavior Intervention Supports and Relational Trust in an Elementary School: A Self-Study of a Principal's Impact on Supportive Environment and Student Achievement

Marilou Salcepuedes Rebolledo

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POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION SUPPORTS AND RELATIONAL TRUST IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: A SELF-STUDY OF A PRINCIPAL’S IMPACT ON SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

BY

MARILOU S. REBOLLEDO

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................ iii

LIST OF TABLES ..................................................................................................................... vii

LIST OF FIGURES .................................................................................................................. viii

ABSTRACT ............................................................................................................................... ix

CHAPTER

I. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 1
   - Background of the Study ...................................................................................................... 2
   - Problem Statement ............................................................................................................... 6
   - Purpose of the Study ............................................................................................................. 8
   - Significance of the Study ...................................................................................................... 10
   - Overview of the Methodology ............................................................................................ 11
   - Conceptual Framework ....................................................................................................... 14
   - Research Questions ............................................................................................................ 18
   - Validations, Limitations, and Biases ................................................................................. 18
   - Key Terms ........................................................................................................................... 19
   - Organization of the Dissertation ......................................................................................... 22

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ................................................................................................. 25
   - Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 25
   - Educational Administration, Supervision and Principalship in Urban Schools ................. 26
   - School Leadership .............................................................................................................. 27
   - Community Engagement .................................................................................................... 31
   - Self-Study Methodology ..................................................................................................... 33
   - Social Emotional Learning ................................................................................................. 34
   - Positive Behavior Intervention Supports ......................................................................... 36
   - Engagement through Relational Trust and Seven Habits .................................................. 37
   - Implementation of PBIS ....................................................................................................... 39
   - Supportive Environment and Academic Achievement .................................................... 40
   - Conclusion of the Literature Review ................................................................................... 42

III. METHODOLOGY ................................................................................................................. 44
   - Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 44
   - Research Questions and Hypotheses .................................................................................. 45
   - Methodology of the Self-Study .......................................................................................... 45
   - Research Design ................................................................................................................ 48
   - Unit of Analysis ................................................................................................................... 49
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. School Quality Rating Policy Measures and Accountability Status</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. OSEP PBIS Implementation Blueprint</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

School discipline continues to this day to be the most challenging issue in education often resulting in students being excluded from their classroom and instruction. Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) is a necessity to ensure that students are in classrooms learning and supported socially and emotionally. The purpose of this self-study is for me to examine and identify ways that I as a leader engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations.

The result of this study will provide leaders in elementary urban schools the tools necessary to engage their staff, students, and parents in building relational trust and implementing PBIS with fidelity. As we have the tools to engage, learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS, we would expect improvements in our supportive environment and student achievement school-wide. This self-study will address the research questions that identify how I as a school leader can engage the school community in building a positive learning environment conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs and that impact supportive environment and student academic achievement.

Self-study will be the methodology used and aligned to the PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, 2015) and Stephen Covey’s 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (2008) conceptual framework.
Through this dialogue, collaboration, and restructuring, I will be able to reflect on the success and implications of the problem through reflective journals, reviews of Professional Development (PD) agendas, materials, exit slips, and critical friend interviews. One elementary public school located in the near west side with 550 students in grades kindergarten through 8th grade representative of various areas in Chicago will be the sample for this self-study.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) first made its debut in the 1980s as a key innovation to addressing discipline and responding to behavior problems in schools across the nation. Nearly 40 years later, school discipline has been and continues to be a challenge for many educators. When the public was asked by the Phi Delta/Kappa Gallup poll in 2002 about the biggest problems facing public schools, lack of discipline was on top of the list along with fighting, violence, gangs, and use of drugs (Rose & Gallup, 2000). In response to this concern that has historically resulted in zero tolerance policies to address the biggest problems, PBIS has been influential as the approach to responding to student behavior problems.

Although much research has been conducted on the effective process of PBIS implementation in schools to address discipline, there is a need to gather information on best practices for school leaders to successfully engage staff, students, and parents. This self-study aims to provide ways to engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. The result of this study will provide educational leaders in elementary urban schools the tools necessary to engage the staff, students, and parents in building relational trust and implementation of PBIS. As we have the tools to engage,
learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS systems, we would expect improvements in our supportive environment and student achievement school-wide.

**Background of the Study**

Education policies and public laws have existed since 1954 with the establishment of The National Defense Education Act (NDEA; Public Law 84-911) to support national education in the United States. Since then, many other policies have been legalized to support educational programs throughout the nation to include elementary and secondary education, bilingual education, and children with disabilities. Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) was introduced in 1997 during the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA; Public Law 94-142). PBIS is defined by Sugai and Simonsen (2012) as “a framework for enhancing adoption and implementation of continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve academically and behaviorally important outcomes for all students” (p. 2). Prior to the introduction of PBIS, research was conducted in the 1980s surrounding interventions in response to addressing the needs of students with behavior disorders (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). Following the introduction of PBIS, the Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Support was established to support schools across the nation to implement PBIS best practices for students with behavior disorders.

Most significantly, amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 1997) codified “positive behavioral interventions and supports,” “functional behavior assessment” (FBA), and “positive behavior supports” (PBS)
into policy and practice and into the business of discipline and classroom and behavior management in every school in America. (Sugai & Horner, 2002, p. 24)

In 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB; Public Law 107-110) was legally established holding states accountable not only for students with disabilities but for all students. NCLB was established in response to A Nation at Risk report indicating declines in skills and test scores in literacy, math, and writing (Jorgensen & Hoffman, 2003). Each state was responsible for ensuring that all students are learning based on high standards and to provide supports when they are not achieving. Subsequently, discipline in schools became prevalent particularly in the 40% increase of suspensions from 1972 to 2009 and the widespread racial discipline disparities (Cohen, 2016). According to the US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, an estimated 3.8% of our nation's students or 1.9 million students were suspended from school once in the 2011-2012 school year (Center for Public Education, 2017). As such, school districts transformed their discipline policies to limit or ban suspensions and focused on improving social emotional and behavior systems to ensure students are in classrooms learning.

In 2015, NCLB was amended to now the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; Public Law 114-95). Similar to NCLB, ESSA continued with using academic achievement as an accountability measure for each state and school district. Unlike NCLB, ESSA added school quality factor as another measure of accountability. These factors were non-academic and include student and educator engagement, school climate and safety, chronic absence, and social emotional learning (Blank, 2016). Each state has
yet to determine which of the non-academic factors will be utilized as an accountability measure.

In the researcher's school district, a survey called *My Voice, My School* (University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, 2016) has been used since the 1990s but was not publicly shared nor used as an accountability measure. The items on the survey measures the *5Essentials* (University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, 2016) which was developed by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research (CCSR). These *5Essentials* are ambitious instruction, effective leaders, collaborative teachers, involved families, and supportive environment (University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research, 2016). *My Voice, My School* survey uses these *5Essentials* to construct questions that are answered by students, teachers, and parents. The areas covered are (1) ambitious instruction which measures English and math instruction, academic press, and quality of student discussion, (2) effective leaders which measures program coherence, teacher-principal trust, teacher influence, and instructional leadership, (3) collaborative teachers measures collaborative practices, collective responsibility, quality professional development, school commitment, teacher-teacher trust, (4) involved families measures teacher-parent trust, parent involvement in school, and parent influence in decision making, and (5) supportive environment measure peer support for academic work, academic personalism, safety, and student-teacher trust. There were also supplemental measures to include collective use of assessment data, reflective dialogue, and grit to name a few. The primary purpose of
collecting and measuring this data is to determine areas of strength and areas of support so that school leaders are able to better improve their schools.

In 2011, the district of the school in this study made the *My Voice, My School* survey and results public. Additionally in the 2013-14 school year, the school district used the *My Voice, My School* survey as the accountability measure for its School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP). The SQRP is used to measure a school’s overall performance rating ranging from Level 1-3. The levels and performance ratings are in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*School Quality Rating Policy Measures and Accountability Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Quality Rating</th>
<th>Accountability Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1+</td>
<td>Good Standing (highest performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Good Standing (high performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2+</td>
<td>Good Standing (average performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Provisional Support (below average performance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Intensive Support (lowest performance)</td>
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In CPS elementary schools, *My Voice My School* survey accounts for 10% of the overall SQRP points. Other SQRP measures include student attainment and growth on the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), student attendance, student growth on ACCESS test for English Learners, and data quality. Each school year, every school receive a SQRP rating and accountability status which indicates a school’s overall academic success.
The SQRP as an accountability measure for a school’s overall performance provides schools not just a rating in comparison to other schools in the district but provides an avenue for setting goals for the following school year. Specifically, schools can determine target areas both in academics and social emotional learning as well as supports and interventions needed for particular areas. For example, schools that do not score high on growth on NWEA MAP or on the My Voice, My School survey can conduct a deep data dive to determine specific areas of improvement and supports needed. This information is further used as a communication tool to school leaders for school improvement and policy making school-wide.

Illinois has yet to determine which of the non-academic factors will be utilized as an accountability measure under ESSA. However, the district of this school in the study uses the SQRP data to measure these non-academic factors of student and teacher engagement, school climate and safety, absenteeism, and social emotional learning. The SQRP rating for the school in this research self-study is Level 1+ high performance.

**Problem Statement**

In 2015, Senate Bill 100 was legalized in Illinois outlining discipline guidelines for public schools specifically eliminating zero tolerance policies. Additionally, Senate Bill 100 also limits student exclusion and instead promotes the use of alternatives to address discipline. In the school district, interventions have been focused on policies such as the adoption and recent revision of the School Code of Conduct that reduces the use of suspension and expulsion to address student misbehaviors and increasing implementation PBIS systems in schools. Furthermore, the Multi-Tier Systems of
Supports (MTSS) also known as Response to Intervention (RtI) was developed to guide schools in the implementation of a three tier system to support students. Guidelines for each tier ranging from 1-3 are outlined to support students academically and more recently developed, socially emotionally through PBIS. Tier 1 outlines supports for all students and uses academically and socially emotionally universal approaches. Tier 2 outlines supports and interventions for some students whose needs are not met through the universal approaches. Tier 3 outlines individual supports and interventions for students whose needs are intensive. In the school in this self-study for example, PBIS include a school-wide behavior matrix outlining expected behaviors throughout the school building. In addition, *The Leader in Me* (Covey, 2008) was implemented in 2014 as part of a PBIS initiative. The Leader in Me focuses on leadership principles by utilizing the *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (Covey, 2008).

Despite the implementation of PBIS and an increase in our *My Voice, My School* survey and *5Essentials* report overall score, elements of our school data were still weak particularly in supportive environment and effective leaders. There was also increase in office discipline referrals. Through observation reflection, there were inconsistencies in the implementation of our school-wide behavior matrix and *Leader in Me* as well as the lack of support and resources when addressing student discipline. With a sense of urgency, I knew I needed to make changes that would impact the school as a whole. I started questioning my leadership practices in the implementation and process of school-wide behavior systems and noticed gaps in the implementation of the process amongst all stakeholder groups. Through self-study, I aim to assess ways to engage the school
community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS. The result of this study will provide this administrator and other school leaders in elementary urban schools the tools necessary to engage the staff, students, and parents in building relational trust and implementing PBIS. As we have the tools to engage, learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS systems, we would expect improvements in our supportive environment and student achievement school-wide.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this self-study is to provide ways through a principal’s perspective to engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. Studies have been completed around relational trust and PBIS in relation to school culture and climate. Positive behavior supports is defined as “an approach to behavior that includes an ongoing process of research-based assessment, intervention, data-based decision making focused on building social and other functional competencies, creating supportive contexts, and preventing the occurrence of problem behaviors” (Kincaid et al, 2016, p. 71). Relational trust is the social interactions and relationships that occur amongst members in a school community which further impact student achievement. According to Bryk and Schneider (2003), there are conditions that support relational trust which entail that all school community members feel good about their working environment. A key factor in relational trust then is the social interactions amongst all members of a school community.
As relational trust and PBIS is crucial to school success, minimal research has been conducted in relation to school community engagement where all stakeholder groups are represented in the process. My self-study aims to provide information and reflection about the impact of my leadership in engaging an urban elementary school community in relational trust and PBIS systems on the overall supportive environment and student achievement of a school. This study will examine my leadership and how I identify the implementation process of relational trust and PBIS through inclusion of all stakeholder groups. The first phase of this study will reflect on the establishment of a leadership team and its commitment to relational trust and PBIS process and development. The second phase of this study will involve reflecting on the impact of proper training through professional development and workshops on best practices coupled by implementation with fidelity and communication to ensure transparency. Finally, data analysis through reflection will provide critical information on the implementation development and next steps.

As a leader and upon review of data, I decided that the first step was to have a leadership team. The establishment of a leadership team will include representation of each stakeholder group (teachers, students, parents) and reflection from my perspective. Prior to any implementation by the leadership team and community, initial stages must be developed for buy-in of PBIS to include commitment for change, shared vision, and learning PBIS model practices (Bohanon & Wu, 2014). The commitment and common vision of all members of the school community plays a very critical role in new policy or reform development ensuring buy in (Bohanon & Wu, 2014) and opportunity to build
capacity while ensuring all voices are heard and represented (Sugai & Horner, 2002). I will reflect on my plan to start with the establishment of a leadership team and development of PBIS because it is important to provide training and professional development to stakeholders. Furthermore, implementation with fidelity was an area of need. As such, once school-wide PBIS is developed, it is important to provide implementation training and supports through professional development and workshops for all stakeholder groups. Professional development and workshops provide a safe space and build relational trust for members to learn and engage in authentic conversations and practice. Relational trust is important in this process where we recognize the needs of all members and support teachers in order to ensure that students learn and succeed (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Once implemented, I will monitor and reflect on the fidelity of implementation and communicate consistently through ongoing professional learning communities and development meetings in order to determine supports when necessary. Subsequently, data analysis is a crucial time for reflection and reinforcement of the process to ensure it is successful. These phases provide opportunities for all stakeholders to engage, learn, and commit to clearly defined PBIS and relational trust systems.

Significance of the Study

School discipline continues to this day to be the most challenging issue in education. In fact, disciplinary issues in schools such as insubordination or tantrums result in the student being excluded from the classroom which further hinder the student from engaging in social interactions and instruction (Strain, Wilson, & Dunlap, 2011). Although there is a reduction in the number of students in Chicago Public Schools
receiving an out of school suspension, there has been an increase in students receiving an in school suspension specifically with zero tolerance policies to behavior systems (Sartain et al., 2015). Additionally, the increase in the in-school suspension is perhaps a response to its use as an alternative to out of school suspension. Unfortunately, in-school suspensions may exclude the student from classroom instructional time. As a school principal, PBIS is a necessity to ensure that students are in classrooms learning and supported socially and emotionally. According to Perry (2017), supporting students in their social emotional needs and development has the potential to increase academic achievement and decrease discipline issues. Although PBIS has been established to support the social and emotional needs of students, the implementation has been a challenge for many educators (Strain et al., 2011). This study will provide leadership ways to engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. The results of this study will provide leaders in similar elementary urban schools the tools necessary to engage their staff, students, and parents in building relational trust and implementing PBIS effectively. As we have the tools to engage, learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS systems, we would expect improvements in our supportive environment and student achievement school-wide.

**Overview of the Methodology**

Self-study will be the methodology used and aligned to the PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, 2015) and Stephen Covey’s The Leader in Me program which utilizes the *7 Habits of Highly...*
Effective People (Covey, 2008) conceptual framework. The methodology of self-study developed as educators wanted to focus more on who they are rather on what they do (Samaras & Freese, 2009). Self-study is important to researchers as this methodology is able “to reveal knowledge of the educational landscape” (Olarte, 2016, p. 8). Through the lens of the researcher, self-study allows for a deep self-reflection regarding the process and results which further helps the researcher understand oneself, discover new ideas, and improve practice. According to Lassonde, Galman, and Kosnik (2009), self-study involves dialogue and collaboration with other school educators and members which help frame or reframe the problem of study. The dialogue, collaboration, and restructuring utilizing the PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework will allow me to reflect on the problem with current research and best practices. The dialogue, collaboration, and restructuring utilizing Covey’s (2013), 7 Habits of Highly Effective People conceptual framework will allow me to support all stakeholders’ specifically adult behaviors in the implementation of PBIS.

A self-study is important for school leaders who are challenged with implementing an effective PBIS system that impact their students' social emotional learning and academic achievement. Specifically, this self-study examines how this school leader can engage the school staff and students in building a positive learning environment conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS. Additionally, the impact of PBIS and relational trust on school supportive environment and student academic achievement will also be addressed.
In conjunction with a self-study, qualitative data will be utilized to address findings. Qualitative data will include my self-reflections in each phase of the study. The self-reflections will include the first phase which is the establishment of a leadership team whose responsibility is process and development of PBIS and relational trust. Additional reflections include the second phase that infuse training through professional development and workshops as well as implementation with fidelity based on implementation measures. The third phase will also include self-reflections on the impact of PBIS and relational trust on supportive environment and academic achievement based on reviews of exit slips, critical friend interviews, and my own self-reflections.

Throughout each phase, self-reflections will include different perspectives from teachers, students, and parents. From the perspective of teachers, I will be able to reflect on the impact of relational trust and PBIS on the social emotional and academic interactions of teachers with students specifically in teaching, implementing, and responding to behaviors. Additionally, I will be able to determine what supports teachers need in order to ensure that students are successful. From the perspective of the students, I will be able to reflect on the impact of PBIS and relational trust on their school performance both academically and socially emotionally. Furthermore, I will be able to determine if PBIS strategies are effective and additional supports students need in order to thrive socially and emotionally. From the perspective of the parents, I will be able to reflect on the impact of PBIS and relational trust on our community partnership as a whole. I will further be able to determine what supports parents and families need in
order to strengthen our home and school connection. Additionally, critical friend interviews will provide reflections based on the framework principles used in this study.

The various phases of self-reflection will provide opportunities for me to engage, learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS systems. Through reflection, I will be able to examine the success and the implications for educational school leaders to engage the school community in the application of PBIS systems and relational trust and the impact of this self-study on me as a school leader. The information gathered from this study will provide school leaders in elementary urban schools the tools necessary to engage their staff, students, and parents in the implementation of relational trust and PBIS school-wide. Once critical information is obtained on best practices to engage, learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS trust systems, we would expect improvements in supportive environment and student achievement school-wide.

One elementary public school with students that are representative of various areas of Chicago will be the sample for this self-study. The school is located in the west side of Chicago with approximately 550 students in grades kindergarten through 8th grade. There are approximately 50 staff members in this school.

Conceptual Framework

This study identifies ways a school principal can engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS. My study aims to provide information and reflection on the impact of engaging an urban elementary school community in relational trust and PBIS
systems on the overall supportive environment and student achievement of schools. In order for implementation to be effective, I will utilize Stephen Covey’s 7 Habits of Highly Effective People conceptual framework (see Figure 1), coupled with the PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework (see Figure 2).

Stephen Covey’s The Leader in Me conceptual framework, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, will be used as the guiding principles of effectiveness in this study. Covey (2013) identifies seven habits that are necessary to be an effective leader in any organization. These seven habits are: (1) Be proactive; (2) Begin with the end in mind; (3) Put first things first; (4) Think win-win, (5) Seek first to understand and then be understood; (6) Synergize; and (7) Sharpen the saw. Each of the seven habits will serve as guiding principles for this researcher to engage the staff in effective implementation of PBIS and relational trust. Figure 1 outlines the guiding principles of each of the habits.

Source: Stephen Covey’s (2013), The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

Figure 1. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People
The habits and their principles are key to effective leadership practices. To become more effective, people need to realize that change starts with them and how they see things and their beliefs have to change if they want to become successful. The first three habits is about shifting our paradigms and how we see things from dependence to independence. The first three habits focus on independence and practices that people need to be effective. Habit #1 focuses on the effectiveness of responsibility, choice, accountability, and initiative. Habit #2. Begin the end in mind, focuses on vision, commitment, and purpose whereas habit #3, Put first things first, relies on focus, integrity, discipline, and prioritization as principles of effectiveness. These first three habits helps people realize that they do not have to depend on anyone to be effective and that they have the independence, power, and ability to make change as well as achieve private victory. The next three habits focus on interdependence and practices that people need to have in order to effectively work with others. Habit #4 focus on mutual benefit, fairness, and abundance. Habit #5 focuses on respect, mutual understanding, empathy, and courage. Habit #6 focuses on creativity, cooperation, diversity, and humility. These next three habits of interdependence helps people realize who they truly are and their ability to work with others and achieve public victory. The final habit focus on renewal and practices that people need to have to continuously improve. Habit #7, Sharpen the saw, focus on our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being are covered in Sharpen the saw. This last habit helps people realize that they have to continuously focus and take care of themselves in order to be effective and successful in what they do.
The PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework was developed by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports which grounded in behavioral sciences utilizing a multi-tier support system. OSEP developed the four critical elements for effective implementation of PBIS. These systems include implementation systems, data for decision making, evidenced based practices, and measurable outcomes. Additionally, each element is accompanied by content and guidelines for implementation. Figure 3 outlines each element and the description.

Source: OSEP Technical Center PBIS, 2015

Figure 2. OSEP PBIS Implementation Blueprint

The element of systems include supports that are needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of practices, efficient use of data, and achievement of outcomes. According to the PBIS Blueprint Framework, the elements of systems is described as “information that is used to select, monitor, and evaluate outcomes, practices, and systems”; data is used to “select, monitor, and evaluate outcomes, practices, and systems”; practices are “interventions and strategies that are evidenced-based in achieving indicated outcomes”; and outcomes are the academic and behavior
targets or indicators that are specified, endorsed, emphasized, and monitored because of their social and educational significance (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, 2015).

**Research Questions**

The following research questions will be examined in this self-study dissertation.

- What are my experiences in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment and relational trust conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs?
- How can my leadership impact the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide and impact school supportive environment and student achievement?
- How can the 7 habits be used to inform leadership while support the school-wide implementation of PBIS?
- How have reflections on this self-study impact me as a school leader?

**Validations, Limitations and Biases**

Strengths of self-study include the interactions that occur during the study such as the interactions with stakeholders, interviews, and daily reflective journals which allow the researcher as mentioned to be open and collaborate with others who may have different perspectives. This strength allows self to be critical and analytical in reframing practice which further help me improve and strengthen my leadership skills.

While self-study has strengths, there are also validation, limitations, and biases. Validation include trustworthiness of the study specifically that while we are studying
ourselves, what we see as valid may not be valued as valid to others. Therefore, descriptive and detailed evidence and results will be contained from the researcher from various perspectives. Russell (2009) recommends adding critical friends such as in interviews to strengthen self-study research. Additionally, this will provide various perspectives and interpretations which are not just limited to one self. The reflections from materials and resources and critical friend interviews increases the validity of the self-study. In addition to validation, limitations include the varying capacities for stakeholders in implementation the PBIS framework and the seven habits as well as effectively implementing best practices. To alleviate these limitations, professional training and workshops is essential to ensuring all stakeholders are well versed in the process. Bias is an important piece to this self-study and I must address my own biases as a researcher. In order to that, a reflection journal will be consistently maintained to address any biases that stem from the study.

Key Terms

This self-study examines one elementary Chicago public magnet school with students that are representative of various areas of Chicago. Key terms that are specific to this school system and to this self-study are listed.

ACCESS: A mandated assessment for all identified English Language Learners that measures proficiency in reading, listening, speaking, and writing in the English language.

Administration: The management of schools and districts and usually includes principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and department leaders.
**Ambitious instruction:** This is one of the five factors of the *5Essentials* measured by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research that measures English and math instruction, academic press, and quality of student discussion.

**Collaborative teachers:** This is one of the five factors of the *5Essentials* measured by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research that measures collaborative practices, collective responsibility, quality professional development, school commitment, teacher-teacher trust.

**Dashboard:** A CPS comprehensive data system that provides reports for assessments, attendance, safe climate, school profile, and data quality.

**Effective Leaders:** This is one of the five factors of the *5Essentials* measured by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research that measures program coherence, teacher-principal trust, teacher influence, and instructional leadership.

**5Essentials:** The five factors that are essential to school improvement and success developed by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research (CCSR). These *5Essentials* are ambitious instruction, effective leaders, collaborative teachers, involved families, and supportive environment.

**Involved families:** This is one of the five factors of the *5Essentials* measured by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research that measures teacher-parent trust, parent involvement in school, and parent influence in decision making.

**Leader in Me:** A PBIS initiative that focuses on leadership principles by utilizing the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and for kids.
**Magnet School:** A public school that has a specialized program and instruction focus such as world language, science and technology, and fine arts.

**Multi-tier System Supports (MTSS):** Formerly known as response to intervention (RTI) is a process and practice system that outlines a three tier model with interventions and supports for all students.

**My Voice, My School Survey:** A survey used by CPS that utilizes the factors outlined in the 5Essentials to construct questions that are answered by students, teachers, and parents.

**Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA) Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP):** A district wide assessment given to CPS students that measures grade level attainment and individual growth in reading and math from Spring to Spring of each school year.

**Office Discipline Referrals:** The referral form utilized by teachers and staff to send students to the office as a result of a discipline that occurred in a school setting.

**Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS):** A key innovation system to addressing discipline and responding to behavior problems in schools.

**Principalship:** The process of taking the lead in managing and directing school operations and functions.

**Relational Trust:** The social interactions and relationships that occur amongst members in a school community which further impact student achievement.
School Code of Conduct (SCC): Behavior expectations and process for redirection adopted by the Chicago Public Schools and Board of Education to create a safe environment for all members.

School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP): Chicago Public School’s policy for measuring each school’s annual performance including test scores, growth, climate and culture, achievement gaps, and attendance.

Self-study: A form of research study that allows for deep self-reflection regarding processes and results which help researcher understand oneself, discover new ideas, and improve practice.

Supervision: Foreseeing and directing of people that are managed such as communicating and interacting with teachers, classroom assistants, and recess monitors, and others that are managed.

Supportive Environment: This is one of the five factors of the 5Essentials measured by the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research that measures peer support for academic work, academic personalism, safety, and student-teacher trust.

Organization of the Dissertation

This self-study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter provides the introduction, background to the study, problem statement, purpose and significance of the study, overview of methodology, and key terms. Additionally, the limitation, delimitations, assumptions and biases of the study are also included. The research questions and the conceptual framework are also presented.
The second chapter provides a review of literature pertaining to the study. Literature includes PBIS conceptual framework, PBIS process and development, relational trust in schools, and best practices for implementation of PBIS and relational. In addition, a synthesis and critical analysis of existing research will be shared as it relates to the study.

The third chapter provides a much detailed self-study methodology. The components include the school setting and environment in this study as well as the design specifically research questions and will include perspectives and theoretical framework. The instruments to include professional learning and development, data collection and procedures, and my personal analysis will also be provided.

The fourth chapter provides the results and findings of the self-study. Results of the process, development, and implementation of PBIS coupled with relational trust will be defined. The self-reflections and critical friend interviews qualitative data and my personal analysis will be shared from the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents. Through these self-reflection documents, I will be able to present the success as well as the impact of building a positive learning environment and relational trust conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs through school-wide PBIS implementation as well as how these impact school supportive environment and student academic achievement.

The final chapter provides conclusions and recommendations based on the results and findings of the study. Furthermore, I will be able to share from my personal experiences through reflection on the implications for school leaders to successfully
engage the school community in application of positive behavior intervention systems and relational trust. Additionally, I will express how this self-study impacted me as a school leader with recommendations for other school leaders when applying best practices in their schools.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The second chapter provides a review of literature pertaining to the study. The concept of educational administration, supervision, and principalship in urban schools will be presented at the beginning of this chapter. This will also be accompanied by school leadership specifically literature on the impact of principals on the school community, supportive environment, and academic achievement. The self-study methodology will also be presented in this chapter followed by the conceptual framework. Literature surrounding the 7 Habits and PBIS will be presented. In addition, literature pertaining to engagement through the utilization of relational trust and the 7 Habits and the effective implementation and impact of PBIS will be shared. Following the presentation of related literature, an analysis on the literature reviewed and a summary of the chapter will be presented.

The following research questions will be examined in this self-study dissertation.

● What are my experiences in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment and relational trust conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs?

● How can my leadership impact the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide and impact school supportive environment and student achievement?
• How can the 7 habits be used to inform leadership while support the school-wide implementation of PBIS?

• How have reflections on this self-study impact me as a school leader?

**Educational Administration, Supervision, and Principalship in Urban Schools**

Educational administration and supervision are often used interchangeably in reference to public education and schools. Administration is the management of schools and districts and usually includes principals, assistant principals, superintendents, and department leaders (Renner, 2019). To ensure that the school or district functions, the role of the administration include financial, human resource, office, and overall school management. Supervision, on the other hand, can be defined as the foreseeing and directing of people that are managed (Renner, 2019). Unlike administration, the role of supervision is strictly communicating and interacting with teachers, classroom assistants, and recess monitors, and others that are managed. Although different in its definition, both administration and supervision complement one another as they both are critical in the operation and management of schools and districts.

The roles of principals have changed over time since the 19th century with the increase in urban population and students in schools coupled with the democratic concept of education which resulted in “ret-thinking of the role of the principal in elementary school” (Elsbree & McNally, 1951). Principals in urban schools now play a critical role in both administration and supervision. In these dual roles, principals take the lead in managing and directing school operations and functions. In order for schools to be effective, principals are in varying roles both as administrator and supervisor. Harris
(2007) shared a study of 100 elementary school principals with respondents who claimed that leadership, shaping campus culture, collaborating, communicating, effective instructional programs, school improvement planning, and supporting at risk programs are critical to be effective in their roles. However, these roles are often challenging in urban school districts characterized by increased responsibility such as decision making centralized in schools and increasing day-to-day tasks, managerial pressure such as crisis and interpersonal conflicts, and complex social needs of students in school such as abuse and hopelessness (Portin, 2000). Additionally, Portin adds that the financial instability, economic deficiency, instructional and language diversity has added layers of challenges in school communities as principals struggle to find resources to ensure that students are supported and successful. Despite these challenges, principals function as school leaders in administrating and supervising the day-to-day organization and needs of the entire school community. Educational administration, supervision, and principalship correlates to my topic as I manage and supervise students and staff and most importantly ensure that students are taught in a supportive learning environment and achieve academic success. A principal’s leadership in schools then are key to the effectiveness of a supportive environment and academic achievement.

**School Leadership**

Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) defines leadership as “establishing agreed-upon and worthwhile directions for the organization in question, and doing whatever it takes to prod and support people” (p. 9). In the context of school then,
leadership is the principal working with the entire community to ensure that teachers are supported and students achieve.

Principals as school leaders play multiple roles such as managing faculty and staff, analyzing data, coaching and mentoring teachers, balancing the school budget, foreseeing district policies, and solving problems to name a few. There are expectations and it seems that these expectations continue to grow. To measure a school leader's overall performance, the district for the school in this study utilizes the Illinois Performance Learning Standards for School Leaders to set performance expectations that every school leader in the district must demonstrate (Illinois Performance for School Leaders, 2017). The six standards are Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results, Leading and Managing Systems Change, Improving Teaching and Learning, Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships, Leading with Integrity and Professionalism, and Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations. Among the six standards, three of the standards focus on school culture and environment as listed below followed as well as the indicators or evidence.

Standard II: Leading and Managing Systems Change. The principal creates and implements systems to ensure a safe, orderly, and productive environment for student and adult learning toward the achievement of school and district improvement priorities. Indicators include the principal creates a safe, clean, and orderly learning environment and collaborates with staff to allocate personnel, time, material, and adult learning.

Standard IV: Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships. The principal creates a collaborative school community where the school staff, families, and
community interact regularly and share ownership for the success of the school. Indicators include the principal proactively engages families and communities in supporting their child’s learning and the school’s learning goals and demonstrates an understanding of the change process and uses leadership and facilitation to manage it effectively.

Standard VI: Creating and sustaining a Culture of High Expectations. The principal works with staff and community to build a culture of high expectations for every student by setting clear staff and student expectations for positive learning behaviors and by focusing on students’ social emotional learning. Indicators include the principal builds a culture of high aspirations and achievement for every students, requires staff and students to demonstrate consistent values and positive behaviors aligned to the school’s vision and mission, and leads a school culture and environment that successfully develops the full range of students’ learning capabilities whether it is academic, creative, social-emotional, behavioral, and physical.

Principals cannot achieve the standards and expectations above alone. As indicators outlined, the principal must work collaboratively with the community to achieve success. The collaborative work between principals and the school community specifically students, teachers, and parents are key to improving student academics and behavior. “It is neither teachers alone nor principals alone who improve schools, but teachers and principals working together” (Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011, p. 11). It is through the principal’s collaborative work then that impacts the community.
In addition to collaborating with the school community to achieve standards and expectations, school leaders play a critical role as change agents to improve school supportive environment and academic achievement. Improving the school supportive environment and academic achievement requires focus on school climate and culture. School climate is “thought to represent the attitude of an organization. The collective mood, or morale, of a group of people” (Gruenert, 2008, p. 57). Climate is the way the group of people feel around their organization and their perceptions. The group of people in that organization develop common expectations with one another which are further passed to people that join the organization generation after generation creating the organization’s defined culture. This define culture then is the way the group of people do things in their organization, the collective personality of the organization, and their values and beliefs. Gruenert claims that the root cause of schools who have an ineffective culture are problems with the school’s climate. “Climate is the main leverage point for any culture, which means that if a school leaders want to shape a new culture, they should start with an assessment of the climate” (p. 58).

According to the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research (Allensworth & Hart, 2018), schools with a strong learning climate impact student achievement. Strong climate practices include staff accountability for student success school-wide, staff data examination and reflection, high expectations for students, and universal support systems for students. Additionally, teacher leadership was critical in fostering strong school climate. Teacher leadership practices include principals supporting teachers as they work together to problem solve and meet to plan
purposefully. Finally, principal practices are key to promoting a strong climate. Indicators for schools that have a strong school climate include well developed systems to support students and shared leadership that is organized, guided, coordinated, and monitored by the principal. In summary, principals just do not create, distribute, and share leadership. They also ensure the leadership and its operating and monitoring systems are working effectively.

**Community Engagement**

As principals impact the community through collaborative work, the relational trust between principals and the community become strengthened. According to Wallace (2011), there are five key responsibilities that leaders need to have to be effective at what they do. These responsibilities are “shaping a vision of academic success for all students, creating a climate hospitable to education, cultivating leadership in others, improving instruction, and managing people, data, and processes” (Wallace Foundation, 2013, p. 6). Each of these five responsibilities need to operate in tandem and require the school leader to engage and collaborate with community members to ensure success. “It’s hard to carry out a vision of student success, for example, if the school climate is characterized by student disengagement, or teachers don’t know what instructional methods work best for their students, or test data are clumsily analyzed” (Wallace Foundation, 2011, p. 7). Furthermore, engagement and collaboration only builds trust as community members hold discussions, find solutions, work together, and solve problems.

One key responsibility as mentioned earlier to ensure leadership success is to create a climate hospitable to education so that safety, order, and social emotional support
are achieved. This responsibility aligns to the standards for school leaders presented.

“School climate is a product of the interpersonal relationships among students, families, teachers, support staff, and administrators” (O’Brennan, Bradshaw, & Furlong, 2014, p. 1). Furthermore, the US Department of Education’s Safe and Supportive Schools outline elements to create such a positive climate which include engagement (relationships, respect diversity, and school participation), safety (social emotional and physical), and environment (physical, academic, discipline). Additionally, this positive climate further enhances student academic increasing student learning engagement and social emotional learning reducing student discipline (CASEL, 2019).

To achieve this culture and climate, school leaders need to build a supportive learning environment where all members of the community are positive, flexible, cooperative, and proactive. Furthermore, principals should allow community members to include students, teachers, and parents to put learning at the forefront as such healthy environment “is characterized by basics like safety and orderliness, as well as tangible qualities such as supportive, responsive attitude toward the children and a sense by teachers that they are part of a community of professionals focused on good instruction” (Wallace Foundation, 2011, p. 8).

In order to create this climate or environment, there has to be a positive behavior intervention support system where all stakeholders are engaged and committed. In supporting the creation of a climate hospitable to education, the implementation of PBIS is critical to the needs of the school community. According to Bradshaw, Mitchell, and Leaf (2010), PBIS is critical to ensuring positive behaviors in students through improved
systems and structures that support staff in implementation. In this research, I am utilizing self-study to reflect on me and my leadership practices in engaging my community in building a positive environment through implementation of PBIS school-wide.

**Self-Study Methodology**

The methodology of self-study developed as educators wanted to focus more on who they are rather than what they do (Samaras & Freese, 2009). Self-study is important to researchers as this methodology is able “to reveal knowledge of the educational landscape” (Olarte, 2016, p. 8). Through the lens of the researcher, self-study allows for a deep self-reflection regarding the process and results which further helps the researcher understand oneself, understand practices, discover new knowledge and ideas, and improve practice (Samaras & Freese, 2009). Barnes (1998, as cited in Samaras & Freese, 2009) outlines characteristics of self-study which include openness, collaboration, and reframing as we examine ourselves in practice. Openness involves allowing self to be open to other people and ideas. This openness requires collaboration through engaging and listening to others. This collaboration further allows self to reflect from various perspectives. Additionally, in this reflective process, the educators or researchers personal, professional, and program practice are renewed and learning is impacted and reframed (Samaras & Freese, 2009).

Some researchers question the validity of self-study methodology particularly limitations as such study only focus on the self. Specifically, what we, the self, see as valid may not be valued as valid to others. Therefore, three approaches and
methodologies to self-study should be considered to include narrative, auto-ethnography, and self-study (Hamilton, Smith, & Worthington, 2008). Furthermore, Feldman (2003) suggests providing detailed descriptions from data collection, and extending triangulation, and including multiple data sources to increase the validity of the self-study. The description should include looking at self in the story (narrative), in the larger context (auto-ethnography), and self in action (self-study). As limitations are a result of studying self only, recommendations include critical friend interviews which provide a different perspective and added strength to the research study.

**Social Emotional Learning**

Social Emotional Learning has garnered much attention as far back as the early 1900s. During this time, there were increasing concerns related to school programming as well as the abundance of programs for schools placed in schools such as drug prevention, sex education, and civic education (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2019). Formed in 1994, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) was established to provide social emotional learning as well as to create a safe, supportive environment for all preschool through high school students. “The environment for learning has become particularly important for educators at a time when young people are experiencing unusual degrees of stress throughout our society” (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2019). Students come to school with high anxiety whether it be fear of school violence or threats they experience in their environment which deeply impact their ability to function academically and socially emotionally. As such, CASEL and many other collaborators
conducted research as well as provided resources and interventions to support all schools in SEL implementation so that they can thrive as individuals regardless of risk factors. SEL is a process that involves the teaching and learning of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes with the goal of students achieving social and emotional competence as they encounter daily challenges. “Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2019).

The Office of Social Emotional Learning for the school district in this research study indicates that school-wide Social Emotional Learning requires factors that are critical to the development process (CPS Office of School Social Emotional Learning, 2016). These include building awareness, commitment, and ownership coupled by a shared vision and action plan. Key team members are critical for effective development and process school-wide as well as a vision or goal for overall improvement. Additionally, building, enhancing, and promoting adult and student SEL allows for practice and reinforcement of research based skills. Through workshops and professional development, stakeholders work collaboratively to ensure implementation with fidelity. Finally, the use of data to monitor the progress and implementation of systems are key to effectiveness. Data resources allow for reflection of systems and structures and opportunities for improvement. In summary, SEL involves a school-wide process through positive behavior supports.
Positive Behavior Intervention Supports

Positive behavior supports (PBS) is defined as “an approach to behavior that includes an ongoing process of research-based assessment, intervention, data-based decision making focused on building social and other functional competencies, creating supportive contexts, and preventing the occurrence of problem behaviors” (Kincaid et al., 2016, p. 71). In conjunction with PBS, PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, 2015) was developed by the OSEP as a framework to guide for effective implementation of PBIS systems utilizing the four critical elements. The four critical elements are measurable outcomes, evidenced based practices, implementation systems, and data for decision making. Each of the four elements are accompanied by content and guidelines for implementation. The first element is outcomes defined as “academic and behavior targets or indicators that are specified, endorsed, emphasized, and monitored because of their social and educational significance” (OSEP Technical Center PBIS, 2015). In this element, the principles include that every member of the organization's shared values of outcomes in creating a positive school environment. The second element is practices defined as “interventions and strategies that are evidenced-based in achieving indicated outcomes” (OSEP Technical Center PBIS, 2015). In this element, it is critical that PBIS practices are school-wide and accepted with fidelity in use. The third element is data defined as “information that is used to select, monitor, and evaluate outcomes, practices, and systems” (OSEP Technical Center PBIS, 2015). In this element, data is utilized within various areas of school organization such as individual persons or classroom or settings.
and as it relates to social emotional and academic achievement and with multiple members to include teachers, students, administrators, and other school staff (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The final element of the PBIS Framework is systems defined as “supports that are needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of practices, efficient use of data, and achievement of outcomes” (OSEP Technical Center PBIS, 2015). In this element, it is critical to have an organizational team, policies, routines, resource supports, professional development, and administrative leadership to be effective and successful (Sugai & Horner, 2002). PBIS involves multi-tier systems that support all students as well as individual or groups of students who are behaviorally challenged in the process. An example would be common expectations for all students and interventions for specific students. The PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework will be a useful tool that I can use as I examine effective implementation of PBIS practices school-wide while infusing the four elements of measurable outcomes, evidenced based practices, implementation systems, and data for decision making.

**Engagement through Relational Trust and Seven Habits**

The purpose of this self-study is to provide ways to engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. In this section of the literature review, engagement will be discussed as it pertains to relational trust and the seven habits. Effective implementation for any change requires engagement by members of the organization and in this case the school. The very essence of engagement is building trust with members. Bryk and Schneider (2002) defines trust as the social relationships
and interactions of students, teachers, administration, and parents with one another in school. All members of the school must have a mutual understanding of their roles and responsibilities in order for relational trust to be effective. Respect, personal regard for others, competence, and integrity are considered critical attributes that build trust in school organizations (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Additionally, Von Frank (2010) shares cultivating trust critical attributes by outlining principal’s behaviors that include being reflective, creating a vision, building relationships before building tasks, trusting teachers to make decisions, providing opportunities for multiple teacher interactions, and listening. These critical attributes align to interdependence habits or shared leadership. When one demonstrates respect and personal regard for others, the Think win-win and Seek first to understand then be understood habits are utilized as we listen to and value other perspectives.

According to Covey (2008), a big challenge in implementing change in an organization is that there is not one perfect approach. Hence, Covey presents four guiding steps called the 4 Imperatives of Leadership that should be used in sequential order to ensure effective change implementation. The very first of the guiding steps is to inspire trust. Covey suggest that there needs to be trust developed within members in order for any change to happen in an organization and adds that “prior to instituting the leadership theme, a school will first want to consider the trust levels that are in existence at the school, and look for ways to resolve or remove areas of mistrust” (p. 166). In this essence, a leader has to be proactive (habit 1) by determining what trust levels are, begin with the end in mind (habit 2) by setting a vision of how to achieve trust, and put first
things first (habit 3) by solving mistrust issues first before implementation. Additional guiding steps in an effective change implementation is to clarify purpose, align systems, and unleash talent. These guiding steps require interaction and collaboration amongst all members where think win-win (habit 4), seek first to understand (habit 5), synergize (habit 6), and sharpening the say (habit 7) are incorporated. Hence, relational trust and the seven habits are used in tandem which further impact effective PBIS implementation.

**Implementation of PBIS**

In addition to relational trust, this self-study aims to provide information and reflection on the overall impact of building a positive learning environment through common school-wide PBIS implementation and expectations. In this section of the literature review, effective implementation and the impact of PBIS will be shared in relation to the seven habits. PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, 2015) developed a framework to guide for effective implementation of PBIS as a critical element for effectiveness. Sugai and Horner (2002) provide key principles in the successful implementation of PBIS school-wide using the framework which are aligned to the 7 habits framework. The first is being proactive by establishing a leadership team. The team's responsibility would include creating mission statements, aligning implementation to school goals, outlining staff development, and measuring outcomes which are aligned to habit 2, beginning with the end in mind. The next set of principles focus on school-wide agreements and supports by putting first things first, habit 3, through instituting action steps and supports to maximize success. Following the establishment of agreements school-wide is arranging
for implementation with high fidelity. According to Sugai and Horner (2002), this principle includes collaboration amongst leadership team and staff members, practice and professional development, and consistent reinforcements. These principles align to the interdependence habits 4 (think win-win), 5 (seek first to understand), and 6 (synergize). Finally, conducting data analysis and monitoring is another key principle where implementation is monitored for improvements, supports, and renewal as well as the successes celebrated which is aligned to habit 7 (sharpen the saw). Hence, effective implementation and the seven habits are used in tandem from the examples provided which further impact a positive learning environment.

Supportive Environment and Academic Achievement

In addition to implementation of relational trust and school-wide PBIS, this self-study aims to provide information on the impact to the school’s overall positive learning environment and academic achievement. In this section of the literature review are existing research on supportive environment and academic achievement aligned to the implementation of the 7 Habits and PBIS school-wide. Supportive environment as indicated in CCSR measures peer support for academic work, academic personalism, safety, and student-teacher trust. Academic achievement measures peer success in varying content areas. Hansen, Labat and Labat (2014) states that PBIS “provides an environment for the development and integration of inclusive systems for positive behavioral as well as effective academic change among all stakeholders across all contexts” (p. 64). In fact, students are able to grow 11 percentile points when schools support their social and emotional development (Perry, 2017). Perry suggest social and
emotional learning should take place throughout the school day in various contexts and not as a separate subject. For example, when students are completing a group project, students learn to work cooperatively (interdependence habits) such as in making decisions and take responsibility such as assigning roles. Schools therefore need to be proactive (habit 1) and have systems that help students thrive socially and emotionally in various school settings. Hence, PBIS defines systems that are positive and inclusive for all members in a school and focus on reducing problem behaviors and increasing positive social emotional as well as academic behaviors. Reducing problem behaviors does not entail zero tolerance policies and removing students from the classroom and instructional setting which negatively impacts their academics (Cohen, 2016). Furthermore, Cohen adds that such practices result in failure to improve the behavior and instead increases repeated behavior. Rather, PBIS involves infusing interventions for students who encounter behavior challenges so that they remain and be supported in the classroom.

Supportive environment does not only include students but teachers and leaders, too. Blasé & Blasé (2000) suggest talking with teachers to promote reflection by giving feedback, praise, modeling, and making suggestions by giving choice, recognizing strengths, and listening are effective strategies for school leaders to promote teaching and learning. Schools therefore need to think win-win (habit 4) and seek to understand (habit 5) systems that help students thrive socially and emotionally in various school settings. When PBIS implementation process is successfully executed as outlined in the framework, the overall school environment becomes a supportive space where all members achieve academically.
Conclusion of the Literature Review

This chapter reviewed literature pertaining to the research study. The self-study methodology was presented at the beginning of this chapter followed by the conceptual framework and literature surrounding the 7 Habits and PBIS. In addition, literature pertaining to engagement through the utilization of relational trust and the 7 Habits and the effective implementation and impact of PBIS was shared. Following the presentation of related literature, an analysis of the 7 Habits and PBIS implementation as it pertains to supportive environment and academic achievement were presented.

From the literature review provided, there is a common theme imbedded in the conceptual framework. The 7 Habits and PBIS combined complement one another in this self-study research. The 7 Habits framework focus on our independence (self) and interdependence skills (ability to work with others) in order to achieve academically and socially emotionally. In order to successfully implement PBIS, there are systems and structures for effectiveness that require use of the seven habits. In order for the four critical PBIS elements of measurable outcomes, evidenced based practices, implementation systems, and data for decision making to occur, the habits of independence and interdependence must be employed. Coincidently in a self-study, individuals examine and reflect on their personal experiences or independence as well as with other people or interdependence.

Theoretically, engagement and implementation through relational trust and the seven habits provided research that support critical principles for effectiveness. In both the engagement and implementation of PBIS, the seven habits and relational trust are
powerful tools that complement one another. In order for engagement to occur in an organization, members must build trust amongst one another. Building that trust requires the use of the seven habits in order for change to be effective. When members are engaged, collaboration and consistency in implementation develops. The result of this is a supportive environment and academic achievement. The next chapter will provide in detail the methods used in this self-study. The data collection and analysis using such methods will be presented.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The third chapter provides a review of the methods pertaining to the study including the research design and methodology, research questions, and hypotheses. Thereafter, the unit of analysis will be presented to include the sample population, setting, and environment followed by the research instrument. Following the presentation of the methods for this self-study, the next part of the chapter will focus on data specifically collection, procedures, and analysis. In addition, issues in relation to bias, error, validity, trustworthiness, and reliability will be discussed. This chapter will conclude a summary of the methods presented. The purpose of this self-study is to provide ways through a principal’s perspective to engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS. This study answers my research questions of how a school leader can engage the school community in building a positive learning environment conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs that impact on supportive environment and student academic achievement.
Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions will be examined in this self-study dissertation:

● What are my experiences in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment and relational trust conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs?

● How can my leadership impact the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide and impact school supportive environment and student achievement?

● How can the 7 habits be used to inform leadership while support the school-wide implementation of PBIS?

● How have reflections on this self-study impact me as a school leader?

Methodology of the Self-Study

In this section of the literature review, the methodology of a self-study will be discussed. Self-study as a research became prevalent in the 1990s influenced by reflective practice and action research (Samaras & Freese, 2009). In this era, teachers used reflection as a strategy to examine their teaching practices and thereafter determined, through various research approaches such as action research, the next steps for professional growth and development. Self-study emerged as researchers began to focus more on who they are rather on what they do (Samaras & Freese, 2009). Self-study can be defined in many ways. Samaras and Freese define self-study as involving the study of the self and study by the self which can include self in many variations such as self as a teacher or self as a researcher in specific fields. The significance of this
methodology compared to others is the idea that self is in the forefront of research. “Self-study researchers do this by doing research on the self, research on the self in practice, and by doing research to understand oneself in practice (Feldman, 2003, p. 46). The purpose of self-study then is personal renewal, professional renewal, and program renewal (Samaras & Freese, 2009). In essence, we are looking our own self and determining what self needs to do personally and professionally to impact program. There are three components that are essential in the field of self-study in order for research to be effective and successful. These characteristics are openness, collaboration, and reframing (Barnes, 1998, as cited in Samaras & Freese, 2009). Openness requires self to be open to other people which further require collaboration through conversations and listening to other ideas. The openness and collaboration would then result in self-analyzing from various perspectives to reframe and restructure program.

According to Perry (2017), supporting students in their social emotional needs and development has the potential to increase academic achievement and decrease discipline issues. Positive behavior supports (PBS) is defined as “an approach to behavior that includes an ongoing process of research-based assessment, intervention, data-based decision making focused on building social and other functional competencies, creating supportive contexts, and preventing the occurrence of problem behaviors” (Kincaid et al., 2016, p. 71). Although PBIS has been established to support the social and emotional needs of students, the implementation has been a challenge for many educators (Strain et al., 2011). Additionally, there is a need to gather information
on PBIS effective process and best practices for school leaders to successfully engage staff, students, and parents.

A self-study research will be conducted in order to examine the impact of my leadership on the PBIS process and best practices on school supportive environment and academic achievement. This self-study is designed using qualitative measures to determine if implementation of relational trust and school-wide PBIS impact supportive environment and student academic achievement. Qualitative measures will include self-reflections and document analysis from professional development materials, journal entries, public data, and critical friend interviews. In essence, I will be looking at my own self and determining what I need to do personally and professionally to impact my school program specifically the supportive environment and academic achievement of the school.

As a school leader, the self-study characteristics of openness, collaboration, and reframing are critical as we interact with staff, students, and parents on a daily basis. Self-study will allow me to examine my impact in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment that impact social emotional and academic achievement. In order to effectively examine my impact, Covey’s *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* will be used. Covey first established the *7 Habits* in 1989 for corporate organizations as guiding principles for effective leadership management. Ten years later the *7 Habits* made its way to school organizations as effective leadership skills essential for all educators and students. The seven habits provide management guiding principles to effectively lead any organization. The first three habits focus on independence or self-
leadership. The first three habits are: (1) Be proactive, (2) Begin with the end in mind, and (3) Put first things first. Within the first three habits are skills that we need to have so that we are responsible, take initiative, set goals, prioritize, and plan. In our world, however, we do not always operate independently. We work, play, and interact with others. Therefore, the next three habits focus on interdependence or shared leadership. The habits are (4) Think win-win, (5) Seek first to understand then be understood, and (6) Synergize. Within these habits are skills that we need to have so that we are able to work with others and problem solve. The final habit is (7) Sharpen the saw which outline skills that we need to have for renewal. The principles that focus on our physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being are covered in Sharpen the saw. The seven habits are critical to my self-study as it outlines practices that are needed as I engage in openness, collaboration, and reframing. The seven habits are significant to me as a school leader as it provides key principles and tools to solve the problem of engaging the community in building a positive learning environment and implementing school-wide PBIS effectively.

Research Design

A self-study will be conducted in order to determine if building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS impact supportive environment and academic achievement. Feldman (2003) describes self-study as “doing research on the self, research on the self in practice, and by doing research to understand oneself in practice” (p. 46). In essence, I will be looking at my own self and determining what I need to do personally and professionally to impact
According to Perry (2017), supporting students in their social emotional needs and development has the potential to increase academic achievement and decrease discipline issues. PBIS is defined by Sugai and Horner (2002) as “a framework for enhancing adoption and implementation of continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve academically and behaviorally important outcomes for all students.” Although PBIS has been established to support the social and emotional needs of students, the implementation has been a challenge for many educators (Strain et al., 2011). Additionally, there is a need to gather information on PBIS effective process and best practices for school leaders to successfully engage staff, students, and parents. A self-study research will be conducted in order to examine my leadership impact on the PBIS process and best practices on school supportive environment and academic achievement. This self-study is designed using qualitative measures to determine if implementation of relational trust and school-wide PBIS impact supportive environment and student academic achievement. Qualitative measures will include self-reflections and document analysis from professional development materials, journal entries, public data, and critical friend interviews.

Unit of Analysis

Sample

One elementary public school with students that are representative of various areas of Chicago will be the sample for this self-study. I am the researcher and also the
principal of the school where the problem exists. As this research is a self-study, no other stakeholder groups will be represented but myself. The school is located in Chicago. The student population for this urban school reflects the very diverse population of Chicago to include 31% African American, 31% Hispanic, 16% Caucasian, 18% Asian, and 4% other. Of the 550 students we have, 42.2% are low income and 0.2% are homeless. We have 9.6% English Language Learners and approximately 6.4% of our students receive Special Education services. There are approximately 50 staff members in this school.

**Setting and Environment**

The school in this research study is one elementary public magnet school located in the near west side of Chicago. There are approximately 550 students enrolled in the school from 7:45 AM until 2:45 PM. The school opens for students at 7:30 AM for breakfast and voluntary parent led recess. The school has an active after school program that provides opportunities for students to participate in academic, athletic, service, and arts programming. The school also has an active and collaborative parent group that supports the school instructionally and financially. This is a magnet school. A magnet school is a public school that has a specialized program and instruction focus such as world language, math, science and technology, or fine arts (www.cps.edu/Schools/Elementary_schools/Pages/Magnet.aspx). The students are representative of various areas of Chicago. The school serves students in kindergarten through 8th grade.
Research Instruments

In this research study, the instruments will include professional development materials such as Agendas and ongoing journal entries. The primary instruments will be my written journal, reflection notes, and conversations with critical friend. I will also review additional notes such as checklist and surveys. Fidelity of implementation tools will also be utilized and reflected throughout the study. The implementation tools include the PBIS Team Implementation Checklist and 7 Habits Leader Implementation Process checklist. Additionally, available public data to include the CPS on-track and off-track academic data will be used for reflection on program improvements. Finally, critical friend interviews will be the final instrument used in this study. These instruments will allow me, the school leader and researcher, to reflect on the impact of PBIS and relational trust on school supportive environment and academic achievement.

Procedures

Based on my reflections from the most current My Voice, My School survey and 5Essentials report overall score, the elements outlined in supportive environment and effective leaders are still considered weak for the school in this self-study. Furthermore, there are inconsistencies in the implementation of our school-wide behavior matrix and Leader in Me as well as the lack of support and resources when addressing student discipline. As a school leader, I needed to change my leadership practices in the implementation and process of school-wide behavior systems ensuring that all stakeholder groups are committed to the implementation process.
Through self-study, I aim to assess ways to engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS. This study will identify the implementation process of relational trust and PBIS through inclusion of all stakeholder groups. The first phase of this study will be the establishment of a leadership team representative of each stakeholder group (teachers, students, parents) who are committed to relational trust and PBIS process and development. The second phase of this study will involve proper training through professional development and workshops on best practices coupled by implementation with fidelity and communication to ensure transparency. The final phase is data analysis which will provide critical information on the implementation development and next steps. Each of these phases will provide opportunities for all stakeholders to engage, learn, and commit to clearly defined PBIS and relational trust systems. In conjunction of a self-study, qualitative data will include my reflections throughout each phase from the perspectives of teachers, students, and parents. The varying perspectives will allow me to reflect on the impact of PBIS on the social emotional and academic interactions to ensure that all stakeholders are supported and successful in the entire process. These phases of self-reflection will also provide opportunities for me to engage, learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS systems. Through reflection, I will be able to examine my success and the implications for educational school leaders to engage the school community in the application of PBIS systems and relational trust and the impact of this self-study on me as a school leader. The results of this study strives to provide administrators in elementary
urban schools the suggested tools necessary to engage the staff, students, and parents in building relational trust and implementing PBIS. Once we have the tools to engage, learn, and commit to relational trust and clearly defined PBIS trust systems, we would expect improvements in supportive environment and student achievement school-wide. According to the PBIS Blueprint Framework, the specific steps for school-wide implementation include:

1. Determine measurable outcomes and what we want students to be able to do.
2. Decide on evidenced based practices.
3. Use data to inform outcomes and support valid decision making.
4. Ensure systems to support effective implementation with fidelity.

**Conceptual Framework: The 7 Habits and PBIS**

This study identifies ways that I as a school principal can engage the school community in building a positive learning environment. The impact on the overall supportive environment and student achievement of an urban elementary school through engagement and implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS will be the focus of this self-study. In order to for implementation to be effective, I will utilize Stephen Covey’s *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* conceptual framework coupled with the PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework.

Effective implementation for any change requires engagement by members of the organization. In order for engagement to occur in an organization, members must build trust amongst one another through dialogue, collaboration, and restructuring as best practices. Building that trust requires the use of the seven habits in order for change
(PBIS) to be implemented and effective. In both the engagement and implementation process, relational trust, seven habits, and PBIS are powerful tools that complement one another. Through this process, I will be able to reflect on the impact of engaging the community and implementing a positive learning environment through reflective journals, reviews of PD agendas, materials, exit slips, and critical friend interviews. Through this self-reflection, I will be able to determine if my leadership practices through the lens of the seven habits impact supportive environment and academic achievement.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

In conjunction of a self-study, qualitative data will be utilized to address findings. As this is a self-study, the data collected will be from and by me. I will be the sole participant of this self-study. Self-reflections will be the qualitative data collected in each phase of the study. The self-reflections will include the first phase which is the establishment of a leadership team whose responsibility is the process and development of PBIS and relational trust. Additional reflections include the second phase that infuse training through professional development and workshops and implementation with fidelity using Team Implementation Checklist (TIC) and Self-Assessment Survey (SAS). The third phase will also include self-reflections on the impact of PBIS and relational trust on supportive environment and academic achievement based on professional development session, journal entries, public on-track/off-track data, and critical friend interviews.
Professional Development Materials

Professional development materials will include Agendas from leadership team and grade level meetings as well as school-wide staff workshops. The focus topics for professional development will include relational trust, 7 Habits, elements of PBIS (systems, practices, data, and outcomes), supportive environment and academic achievement. At the end of each professional development session is an exit slip that teachers and staff submit which include comments and suggestions regarding the focus topic. I will be using these as part of my qualitative reflection data.

Journal Entries

An important tool for this self-study will be my journal entries. The journal entries will include answers to question prompts that I will develop which are specific to my study. The journal entries will include what I see, feel, think, and decide in each phase of the study.

The following is a list of possible questions for journal entries:

- Why is it so important to build relational trust?
- How is the 7 Habits critical to my leadership practices?
- What impact does this study have on supportive environment for each of my stakeholder groups at the first phase? Second phase? Third phase?
- What impact does this study have on the academic achievement of students?
- How has my staff changed in the implementation process?
- What am I seeing as critical to effective implementation?
- What supports does my community need in the process?
• What is the most challenging part of this process?
• How have I changed as a school leader in this process?
• What do I as school leader need to do to ensure this process continues to be successful?

Public Data

The data that will be reflected in this self-study will be the CPS On-track data and school environment data. Both pieces of data are reported every five weeks by a CPS system called Dashboard. In order for a student to be considered on-track, the student must maintain an attendance rate of 95% or above and receive no failing grade/s. A failing grade is a D or an F in reading and math based on each 5 week academic report. The school environment data reports discipline data particularly the in school suspension and out of school suspension rates for students in the school. Both the on-track and supportive environment data is shared during grade level meetings with teachers. In the effective implementation of PBIS school-wide, we would see an increase in the on-track academic data and a decrease in the discipline rates.

Critical Friend Interview

Lassonde et al. (2009) critical friends as a tool that was necessary in self-study research. Schuck and Russell (2004) describe critical friends as those who are committed to the success of the researcher by providing data and critiquing the researcher’s work. Additionally, critical friends play a significant role in self-study as they provide support, constructive feedback, and information for the researcher to reflect on current practices and necessary improvements and adjustments as needed. In this self-study, my critical
friend will engage in dialogue with me at the beginning of the study, midway of the study, and at the end of the study. The critical friend I chose is a principal of another school. We both lead a school with similar student and staff population.

**Bias and Error, Validity, Trustworthiness, and Reliability**

Self-study methods are usually qualitative in nature. Data include interviews, recorded presentations, and daily reflective journals. Strengths of self-study include the interactions that occur during the study which allow the researcher as mentioned to be open and collaborate with others who may have different perspectives. This strength allows self to be critical and analytical in reframing practice. While self-study has strengths, there are also validation and limitations. Validation include trustworthiness of the study specifically that while we are studying ourselves, what we see as valid may not be valued as valid to others. In other words, what we may experience on our own study may not be as similarly significant to others. Feldman (2003) provides suggestions to increase validity of self-study to include providing clear, detailed descriptions of data collection and representation, extending triangulation accompanied by multiple data sources, and providing value of the impact or change the study has on our work.

Additionally, Hamilton et al. (2008) provide three approaches to strengthen self-study methodologies. The methodological approaches include narrative, auto-ethnography, and self-study. Narrative involve looking at a self in the story, auto-ethnography involve looking at self in the larger context, and self-study involve looking at self in action (Hamilton et al., 2008). Limitations to self-study is the fact that self is limited. Hence, this can actually be a strength. “When research reported by others fails to speak to one's
personal practice, self-study will never be disappointing” (Russell, 2009, p. 76). Russell recommends adding critical friends such as in interviews to strengthen self-study research. Additionally, this will provide various perspectives and interpretations which are not just limited to one self.

Summary

In this self-study, I aim to assess ways to engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS. The sample, setting, instruments, procedures, and framework provides a description of the unit of analysis. The types of data collection to include professional development materials, journal entries, public data, and critical friend interviews will be reflected and analyzed. To eliminate any bias, error, validity, trustworthiness, and reliability to the self-study, sources such as use of multiple data sources, triangulation, detailed descriptions, and critical friends will be utilized. The result of this study will provide this administrator and other school leaders in elementary urban schools the tools necessary to engage the staff, students, and parents in building relational trust and implementing PBIS. This study answers my research questions of how a school leader can engage the school community in building a positive learning environment conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs that impact on supportive environment and student academic achievement.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

In this self-study research, the purpose was to examine ways that I as a principal engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. The fourth chapter provides an overview of the self-study and the results and findings of engaging the community and the implementation process. Specifically, I was reflecting on my leadership skills in the engagement of the community and implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS. The self-reflections and critical friend interviews qualitative data and my personal analysis will be shared. Through these self-reflection documents, I am able to answer my research questions on the impact of building a positive learning environment and relational trust conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs through school-wide PBIS implementation and how these impact school supportive environment and student academic achievement. Through self-reflection, I am allowing myself to be critical and analytical in reframing my practice which only helps me improve and strengthen my leadership skills.
Research Questions and Hypotheses

The following research questions will be examined in this self-study dissertation:

- What are my experiences in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment and relational trust conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs?
- How can my leadership impact the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide and impact school supportive environment and student achievement?
- How can the 7 habits be used to inform leadership while support the school-wide implementation of PBIS?
- How have reflections on this self-study impact me as a school leader?

Overview of Research Study

The purpose of this self-study research was to examine how I engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. Through self-study, I am able to reflect on my leadership experience in the implementation process of relational trust and school-wide PBIS. This chapter provides the results and findings of my research questions on engaging the community and the implementation process, the impact on supportive environment and student achievement, how I used the seven habits to inform and support school-wide implementation, and how this self-study has impacted me as a school leader.
Research Question #1

What are my experiences in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations?

In order to share my experiences in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS, I had to examine my relationship with the members of my community. Effective implementation for any change requires engagement by members of the school community and the very essence of engagement is building trust with the members of that community. Covey outlines four guiding steps called the 4 Imperatives of Leadership leaders utilize to ensure effective change implementation. The very first of these guiding steps is to inspire trust which required me to develop before implementing any PBIS expectations. So how did I inspire trust? I engaged my community by utilizing the first three habits of independence and practices that people need to be effective.

Habit #1: I was proactive rather than reactive. I began with the end in mind by setting a vision. I put first things first by making this a priority for school improvement. I conducted difficult conversations regarding our behavior system, listened, acknowledged, and accepted the need for change. I asked rather than instructed who would be on the team and committed to this change process. I acknowledge and accepted the need for change. We established the team and had a shared vision for our students and our school. These are noted in this reflection:
My vision or end in mind was to reestablish a system that is easy for all community members to understand and a simple process to follow. I also think it is important for faculty and staff to be involved in this process as synergy and win-win equals success for all. (written journal, January 6, 2018)

Additionally agenda and minutes from one of our team meetings indicated Social Emotional Learning (SEL) interventions and resources as areas of need. I engaged team members in conversations and they were able to share successes such as a solid system with structures and processes in place. According to the PBIS framework, the principle of high fidelity of practice implementation must be in place which include structures and systems to ensure successful implementation and student responsiveness (OSEP Technical Center on PBIS, 2015). However, it was noted that additional resources were not in place particularly for supporting the implementation process and chronic behaviors as noted in this reflection:

In reviewing the MTSS meeting minutes, I noticed that we are making improvements in our implementation systems and processes but also noticed a sense of urgency around implementation of PBIS school-wide as well as Tier 2 and 3 social emotional learning resources. As noted in Agenda minutes and inquiring about what the needs were, a priority was resources to support teachers in the implementation process and managing chronic behaviors. (written journal, February 14, 2018)

In my ongoing proactiveness during the implementation process, I continued to seek feedback from stakeholders regarding our implementation. It was important for me
to do this so that I can continuously engage stakeholders in the process and effectively implement our systems. As such, our team conducted a PBIS Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) so that we can identify needs in the initial implementation process. After conducting this survey to our teachers, I again prioritized their feedback to determine next steps as outlined in this reflection:

Reflecting on the survey results made me realize my staff really do need support and it was my job to ensure that they are supported as I did not provide them that support. Weak areas that require immediate support include resources for Tier 1, interventions / resources availability, consequences for problem behaviors not defined clearly, options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when a problem behavior occurs, data collection ongoing and summarized, staff involvement in school-wide interventions, ongoing training and support from district/ network, behavior expectations not taught in non-classroom settings, procedures and consistent consequences for problem behaviors, coaching, monitoring progress of social emotional learning, development of Behavioral Health Team for chronic behaviors, skilled Functional Behavioral Support staff, and trainings for families. This will be our action items moving forward. (written journal, May 11, 2018)

Habit #2: I began with the end in mind. Although we already had an existing PBIS matrix, teachers and I felt the need to revamp it with a much simpler system that was easy for students to communicate and comprehend, one that focused on positive behaviors. I knew we needed to change our matrix and revisit our system. I also knew
that if they were part of the change process, overall it would be effective. At our first team meeting, we all acknowledged the need to revisit our school-wide behavior matrix. We discussed what was important to us as a school, our values, and what we needed to do to improve our practices. I praised them for their willingness to change for the better. Additionally, the matrix was revamped and hence the 3Bs were developed: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe. The positive behaviors and the expectations at common locations were outlined. I was pleased to hear that we had the same vision and goals for our students and that their success was our priority as evidenced in the following reflection:

We decided to revise our behavior matrix so that students and staff can focus on a few core expectations. We wanted to be able to clearly communicate the expectations and the consequence include a systematic approach. The idea of the 3Bs were presented: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe. Everyone in the team liked the idea and were extremely excited about it. We accepted this initiative and decided on next steps which include providing expected respectful, responsible, and safe behaviors in various areas of our school. We outlined what these behaviors looked like in the hallways, cafeteria, special classes, recess, classroom, assemblies, etc. In addition to discussing what is the least effective in addressing discipline, we discussed how punitive responses do not work and that our goal was to ensure students remain in the classroom as much as possible.

(written journal, January 7, 2018)
Habit #3: I put first things first. Having an end in mind or a vision, allows me to focus on action items that support that vision. Therefore, at the onset of this change process I made sure that as part of our CIWP, our school improvement plan, relational trust and supportive environment were embedded. As we reflected on our school data and feedback from school improvement surveys, it was clear that supportive environment would be part of our strategic plan as outlined in this reflection:

Our shared vision was that if we set and achieve important personal and academic goals, use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships, then we see students who demonstrate decision making and responsible behaviors to achieve school and life success, improved social / emotional development, classroom behavior and academic performance. This ultimately leads to a stronger sense of Relational Trust as measured by the 5 Essentials Report. (written journal, January 2, 2018)

Following this first phase which was the establishment of a leadership team and development of a school-wide PBIS, the next phase was proper training through professional development and workshops. In this phase, it was critical to utilize the additional guiding steps of clarifying purpose, align systems, and unleash talent. So how did I clarify purpose, align systems, and unleash talent? I engaged the community by utilizing the next three habits of interdependence and practices as well as renewal habit that people need to have in order to work effectively with others. Interdependence as outlined in the 7 habits framework is the ability to work with others. In my effort to clarify purpose, align systems, and unleash talent, I wanted to ensure that members
understood the processes we have in place. As noted in our grade level meetings the week of September 10, 2018, I engaged members in the urgency of school improvement as outlined in 5E data and the importance of fidelity in implementation process. I inquired their thoughts and feedback for anticipated challenges and next steps to support their work as noted in this reflection from meeting minutes.

During this week’s grade level meeting, we reviewed SEL practices to include implementation of Calm Classroom, Second Step, and LIM. We also reviewed the ODR process and addressing student behavior via office vs. classroom managed behaviors. Suggestions for effective implementation of SEL practices were provided and modeled to include consistent scheduling, student leader facilitation, morning message inclusion, and communicating to families. We noted students who require SEL support based on ODR data and strategies to support them in the classroom. I look forward to positive changes at our next SEL focused GLM. (written journal, September 10, 2018)

Additionally, in our Lighthouse / School Culture Climate team meeting, I provided a visual for team members whereby they were able to connect how the systems we have in place align and support one another and critical to the improvement and alignment process. This was powerful in helping members connect SEL systems as a whole rather than independent of one another as documented in our school culture and climate meeting.

We had our Lighthouse meeting today. What a great meeting! I know there’s a lot of SEL going in school and wanted to visually show everyone how one
connects to the other. I shared all of the SEL resources we have in our school and asked them to show how each compliment and align with one another. They were able to understand how the school-wide PBIS matrix aligns to the 3Bs, how the Second Step and Calm Classroom resources teach skills that support our PBIS matrix and 3Bs, and how the 7 habits are imbedded in each PBIS source. It was not one more thing they had to do. (written reflection, September 20, 2018)

Seeing how the systems align with one another, we furthered our work and discussed next steps to build capacity school-wide. We then worked in groups to determine our needs and action steps which is a critical feature for implementation of PBIS. As noted in minutes from our September 20 meeting, we came up with action teams for leadership and culture as priorities specifically student learning through direct lessons and modeling and leadership events through school-wide and classroom events.

*Habit #4: I thought win-win.* By sharing our initiative, we were able to work together and come up with best practices. In the initial development process, I encouraged consideration of others perspectives and agreements ensuring they were fair and benefited everyone. This is documented in our expectations for best practices at a grade level meetings on December 5, 2017. Through this interaction, I was able to gather individual feedback. This feedback in turn was shared with the leadership team who made sure to be inclusive of other perspectives in the development process. As a result, when the school-wide PBIS initiative was shared with our entire body of staff, students, and parents, it was accepted and supported as indicated in our in our February 2, 2018 school improvement training anecdotal. Teachers worked with one another to understand
the matrix. We collectively decided to designate the first month of implementation as heavy review and practice with our students. Teachers practiced the expectations.

Teachers shared how they took students to various locations outlined in the matrix and practiced the positive behaviors. When I visited Kindergarten through 8th grade classrooms and asked about the 3Bs, the students were able to verbalize and give me an example often referring to the matrix which indicated they knew what the matrix entailed. Additionally, the students were enthusiastic when this was first proposed as I reflect on this written journal:

> It was important to garner student thinking in this process. We invited a few students to help us with proposed initiative and process at the onset. The students shared feedback with me indicating, “I like the 3Bs because it’s easy to remember.” The students suggested “we should have them in all the classrooms and around the hallways.” I completely agreed and ordered large prints to post school-wide. (written journal, January 9, 2018)

In addition to the staff and the students, the parents were thrilled to hear about the 3Bs initiative as they shared stories during principal coffee day:

> Today, parents were sharing how their child talks about 3Bs at home and how they use it now as a family. (Redacted) talks about the 3Bs at home all the time and he shows us what they are...we noticed a change in his behavior that we decided to use it at home. He is eager to be caught. (written journal, January 26, 2018)
Habit #5: I had to seek first to understand before I understood. When a suggestion or feedback was provided that I did not agree with, it was not disregarded immediately. It was important for me to continue to inspire trust by listening to others first. We were discussing transitions in the hallways for example during a grade level meeting. My initial thought was that hallway transitions should be a level zero, no volume. However, a teacher disagreed with me. Rather than presenting my viewpoint, I had the teacher explain her thinking while I listened. We eventually respected one another’s thinking and came to a mutual understanding as noted in this reflection from the December 5, 2017 meeting minutes:

We outlined what these behaviors looked like in the hallways, cafeteria, special classes, recess, classroom, assemblies, etc. We also discussed transitions in the hallways. In my opinion, hallways transitions should be at a level zero, no volume. (Redacted) disagreed with me. I wanted to say “are you kidding me?” but I didn’t. We eventually came to a mutual agreement of level 1 or whisper voices. (written journal, January 7, 2018)

Covey states that in utilizing the seek first to understand habit where you really listen to another person’s point of view before sharing your understanding, they feel heard and acknowledged. When that happens, you can almost come to a mutual understanding and a win-win solution. So how did I respond? I didn’t. I asked a clarifying question, acknowledged the teacher’s thinking, and offered a mutual solution as noted in this reflection:
Instead, I listened and listened some more. I respectfully asked for her thinking in which she responded, “If we are promoting a positive learning environment, kids not being able to greet their friends in the hallway because they have to be at level zero, no talking at all seems to be contrary to what we are promoting as a school.” I understood her point of view and when I suggested how about a level 1, whispering voice, it was immediately agreed upon. (written journal, January 7, 2018)

Through this example, I was exhibiting seeking to understand through listening. By being a listener, I was able understand the teacher’s viewpoint. Although quite different than my own, I understood the teacher’s reasoning and it was best to meet halfway or the win-win approach in terms of a mutually agreed upon volume level. This was accepted by team members and we were able to move forward in a positive way.

Habit #6: We synergized. In addition to the development of the 3Bs, the school Lighthouse Team along with members who participated in the development of the 3Bs, planned initiatives to align the 3Bs with our existing Leader in Me process where student leadership is infused. As part of the PBIS system, we wanted to acknowledge students who exhibit the 3Bs and to help achieve our desired outcomes. My hope was that they wouldn’t feel this was one more thing to do but rather understand that the 3Bs align to what we were already doing as a school. Through synergy, I was pleased that they were able to align both the 3Bs and Leader in Me as documented and reflected in our phase one meeting on January 7, 2018 where the PBIS school-wide matrix produced was revisited to align the 3Bs to each habit. The synergy habit continued as we reviewed our
reward system. The collaborative work later helped Lighthouse and Culture Climate team compromise and come up with alternative action plan that we would not have otherwise thought of if collaboration and synergy were non-existence. As part of the PBIS framework for implementation, it is critical to ensure that a system existed where students were acknowledged and rewarded for meeting expectations and that all are aware of these reward system as well as receive them. This student benefit was another critical feature of PBIS framework for implementation and important in ensuring that changes to systems and structures were in place as noted in this reflection.

Thinking about collaboration, my hope was to connect the 3Bs with the 7 habits. We decided to go with “BEE Caught!” initiative where student leaders would be acknowledged if they were caught exhibiting the 7 habits. We were all very excited to begin the year with this new rewarding initiative. We decided that we would focus first on Be Respectful, then Be Responsible, and finally Be Safe as we end the school year and prepare for summer. Acknowledging student leaders is critical to the LIM program at school. Application for student leaders that will assist our school with respectful, responsible, and safe behaviors were posted. These include afternoon announcer, greeters, door holders, safety patrol, and special events speaker. Teachers also have individual roles in their classrooms to support 3Bs. In our meeting, we discussed other alternatives such as making sure that expectations are posted in each classroom and around the school hallways.

(written journal, January 9, 2018)
Synergy was also evident in the proper training phase which required collaboration amongst all members of the community. Reflecting on the agenda indicated that roles and responsibilities allowed for members to be active participants in meetings such as facilitator, timer, note taker, and data tracker. Action items were delegated to my core team members such as slides for presentation and resources. In doing so, I feel that I am able to build trust in staff that are part of this initial process and allows for meaningful, constructive feedback on what should work and what will not. Through this synergy and collaboration, we were able to work together to develop a positive behavior system and monitor progress. Utilizing the Team Implementation Checklist (TIC) data for example indicated at the initial implementation that only 20% felt that we achieved in terms of using data to guide implementation of school-wide expectations and interventions compared to 100% at mid-year implementation. Another example is in the initial implementation where TIC data showed that 40% felt we achieved, 53% felt we were in progress, and 6% felt not in place for clearly defined and consistent consequences and procedures for undesirable behaviors compared to 75% achieved, 25% in place, and 0% not in place at the mid-year implementation. We were definitely making progress.

We were also able to hear from various perspectives about our implementation progress as noted in the reflections below. From the perspective of the students:

The students were really excited about the 3Bs. It was much easier for them to remember the school-wide rules and for teachers to implement in their classrooms. There was a sense of continuity from K-8th grade as well as in specials classes in the implementation of this school wide PBIS. They are visible
everywhere and available for reference. When asked students were able to explain what the 3Bs are. That was a celebration! (written journal, January 15, 2018)

I also shared similar thoughts in my critical friend interview:

With the kids, when I or teachers ask them during a restorative conversation what's wrong or if they were ever sent to the office, they immediately know what they did wrong and refer to the 3Bs. That language is constantly used in the classroom. I also noticed that in the restorative component, kids are more open and you can relate to them whereas before it was more asking students what did you do and then here's your consequences. Now we embrace and get deeper into the conversations and students are able to share more about themselves and I think again it goes back to building that relational trust with them and getting to know them and where they are coming from. (critical friend interview, March 1, 2018)

The parents also shared their perspectives. Not only is the implementation happening at home, but also at school allowing for the home and school connection that all schools thrive for. From the perspective of the parents:

The parents were thrilled to hear about the 3Bs initiative. During principal coffee day today, parents were sharing how their child talks about 3Bs at home and how they use it now as a family. (Redacted) talks about the 3Bs at home all the time and he shows us what they are...we noticed a change in his behavior that we decided to use it at home. He is eager to be caught. (written journal, January 26, 2018)
**Habit #7: I sharpened my saw.** As I engaged my community in building a positive school environment through implementation of relational trust and school-wide PBIS, there were times when I disagreed with other perspectives. I get frustrated when pink office referral forms accompany a student who has not had a prior behavior concern. I get even more frustrated when no conversation has taken place to correct behavior prior to being sent to the office.

A student was sent to the office by a homeroom teacher for an incident that occurred in another class. I wondered why this homeroom teacher sent this child to the office. When I asked the non-homeroom teacher what happened, she had a confused look on her face and quite frankly so did I in addition to being frustrated. She informed me the student was playing around and hit another child unintentionally. Furthermore, the matter was already resolved by the students involved and students transitioned with their class. When I confronted the homeroom teacher about the incident, teacher shared that student hit another student in specials class and that is why she referred him to the office. (written reflection, February 7, 2018)

Part of sharpening one’s saw is the idea of continuous improvement through exercising physical, social/emotional, spiritual, and mental capabilities. We are all learning from this process. Learning takes time and learning involves mistakes. It is through mistakes that we actually learn and make improvements. Rather than remain frustrated, I had to think about supports for my teachers as in the example shared in my reflection. At times, when we get frustrated, simply removing self from frustration
through exercise and meditation helps with renewal and the opportunity to reflect on continuous improvement as shared in this reflection:

I had to go for a short run to clear my mind and for my own social emotional strength. I think back when I was a teacher. I feared sending any student in the office as it was an implication that I could not control my students. However, I also had the tremendous support of my teaching partner, an experienced veteran teacher, who taught me how to manage behavior. I learned from collaborating with peers, observing experts in my school, and struggling and finding what works. I thought about how I can support my staff as I reflect on this past school week. (written reflection, February 10, 2018)

Sharpening my saw allowed me to reflect on next action steps specifically how to support teachers. Although much discussion and professional learning were provided regarding the implementation of PBIS matrix, students were still being referred to the office for incidents that did not warrant an office referral. During our MTSS meeting on February 14, 2018, the team discussed tier 2 and 3 teacher supports for chronic behaviors as noted in meeting minutes. Another key feature of the PBIS framework for implementation is coaching supports specifically in making action plans a reality. Due to this sense of urgency, we immediately addressed challenges and needs through reviewing procedures for classroom vs. office managed behaviors and outlining supports for teachers to utilize before office referrals to include coaching supports for teachers and ensuring that the three re-teaching opportunities were being utilized as part of the procedures.
Research Question #2

How can my leadership impact the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide and impact school supportive environment and student academic?

In order to share my experiences on the impact of my leadership on the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide, I had to investigate my leadership effectiveness and the environment of the school as a whole. One of the critical pieces of data that I utilized for information on effective leadership and school supportive environment was the 5Essentials data. When I started this research study in 2017-18 school year, the school in this research study was neutral according to published 5Essentials data. I am always open to improving as a leader. I accept and value constructive feedback from the data. However, when the 5E data was published again the following school year, the school in this research study was not yet organized. I was not at all pleased by the results as indicated in the following reflection.

I opened the document and was dismayed to see that we were ‘not yet organized’ and that we were weak in our school supportive environment. My heart sank. I was told by another principal not to take it seriously but I did. I had to take a step back and reflect on our system, me, as something is not working. I was obviously not happy but knew I have a lot of work to do as the school leader. (written journal, June, 5, 2018)

As a result, I dug deeper into the 5Essentials data. I immediately noted components and factors that resulted in the outcome. I utilized the PBIS effectiveness and 7 habits framework as I noted the impact on school supportive environment and
student achievement. I jotted teachers, student, and parent responses both current and historical particularly in areas that showed weakness. The components and factors that were weak were teacher influence, collective responsibility and relational trust. I was hurt by this data as I felt a lot of work has been placed in creating a supportive environment particularly in implementing PBIS. For example, the 5Essentials data indicated areas of weakness for teacher influence where teachers have influence in decisions regarding school policies and practices particularly in setting standards for student behavior with only 33% indicating that teachers have a great deal of influence. Another example of a weak area was collective responsibility with only 19% feeling that they help maintain discipline in the entire school, not just their own classroom and 29% feeling responsible for helping students develop self-control.

I became increasingly proactive (habit #1) and dug deeper into the data, my reflections, agenda items, minutes from meetings, professional development, and professional learning cycle documents. I noticed areas of success such as systems and structures in place as noted in Agenda items and action plan as noted in meeting notes. More noticeably, I encountered challenges to my effectiveness as a leader as I analyzed my experience in the implementation of school-wide PBIS and its critical elements. It was in this phase of the research study that I consistently reviewed the SAS and TIC documents and reflected on my practice as a school leader. In reflecting on the initial SAS, there were notable items that required much attention such as problem behaviors defined, consequences outlined, and staff involvement which when aligned to the TIC were not implemented such as resources for Tier 3, action plan to address systems of high
priority for change, and individual support team structures. As such, I reflected on these practices, challenges, and successes as a result of action plans. I share them here.

*Outcomes support academic achievement.* Before the development of the 3Bs, we did not have the outcomes or what we want our students to be able to do at the onset of this PBIS school-wide process. Therefore, we had to begin with the end in mind (habit #2) to create our vision and action plan for an effective implementation. Although we already had an existing matrix, a PBIS system that was simple for students from Kindergarten through 8th grade to communicate and comprehend and one that focused on positive behaviors was the favorable outcome. We worked on that change process of revamping our PBIS matrix to what is now the 3Bs: Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe. The PBIS implementation Blueprint indicates that outcomes are the academic and behavior indicators that are specified and monitored (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, 2015). Therefore, we put first things first (habit #3) and outlined, practiced, and monitored the positive behaviors and the expectations at common locations. All classrooms were implementing the matrix indicated by the display and reference to the 3Bs chart during entry, dismissal, transitions, assemblies, lunch, and recess. For example, in my observations entry, recess, dismissal, and classroom supervisors referred to the matrix when addressing student and situational challenges. Additionally, teachers utilized restorative approaches such as student reflections or peace circles to address misconducts. This is reflected in my response to a question asked during my critical friend interview regarding what changes I saw in my staff:
I noticed that they continued to refer to behavior matrix but what I also noticed was that they were building relationships more with her students. So I think that zero tolerance policy is slipping away. It used to be what the consequence is for this child. But now the conversation is shifting to more of a restorative approach so I think that’s a huge plus. (critical friend interview, March 1, 2018)

The outcome of this change resulted in 8 out of 30 classrooms that have referred students to the office in the 2018-19 school year compared to 20 classrooms in the 2017-18 school year based on ODR data. I was pleased about this outcome which only indicates that more students are in classrooms receiving the academic instruction they need rather than in the office. This is evident in reviewing the on-track data and school district discipline data. I also noticed a positive significance with internal on-track data which saw an increase at each 5th week marking period this school year compared to each 5th week marking period last school year. Additionally behavior and discipline data comparison provided by the district indicated that there were 0% of school suspensions in 2018 compared to .2% in 2018 and 0% of misconducts resulting in out of school suspensions in 2018 compared to 2.7% in 2017.

*Practices support student behavior.* In the implementation of the 3Bs, it is important to determine what research based interventions and/or strategies would be most effective in achieving the desired student outcomes. Our prior behavior system did not indicate high level practices of student behavior as evidenced by students’ inability to explain what our prior systems were. For example, 46.7% indicated in TIC that expected behaviors are directly taught in 2017-18 compared to 75% in the 2018-19 school year.
thus far which is evident that school-wide practices support student behavior. In order for implementation to be most effective, it is important that PBIS practices are school-wide and implemented with fidelity (OSEP Technical Center, PBIS 2015). At the school in this research study, the students and the staff were engaged in practicing expected behaviors school-wide through training and professional development workshops thus resulting in improved practices school-wide.

Today, we completed a professional development on our PBIS specifically our behavior matrix. The professional development began with a presentation on our initiative followed by I felt that this change in our school wide behavior matrix was valued, complete buy-in by staff, as members were representative of various departments and cycles. (written journal, February 2, 2018)

Intervention and strategies were discussed and not always agreed upon including those that were least effective such as punitive measures/ punishment and exclusion from curriculum based activities. Other alternative and win-win (habit #4) strategies included primary prevention through school-wide application, addressing positive/negative behaviors, consistent and full implementation and participation. The Behavioral Health Team (BHT) was developed specifically in addressing chronic Tier 2 and 3 behaviors. Furthermore, an emphasis on social emotional instructional support where the school-wide PBIS were taught, modeled, and discussed directly was an Agenda item in one of the first BHT meeting. BHT members discussed SAS data on May 2018 and determined needs and action steps for interventions and strategies to utilize with Tier 2 and 3 students as noted in May 4, 2018 minutes.
Resources were also provided to utilize with students. These resources included self-reflections, activities for morning meeting, and student leadership roles. Students were able to verbalize behavior expectations and received a bee from their teachers to acknowledge their hard work. There was also a universal language school-wide and the 3Bs were the rules. In order to measure the success of the practices, data analysis is also critical to the effective implementation as it allows members to seek to understand (habit #5) before making assumptions on best practices. The data from the SAS indicated areas of improvement for effective implementation of practices and information regarding specific training. The SAS data at the initial first year of implementation phase 2017-18 also indicated that teachers still needed support in practices that help students achieve outcomes. For example, only 20% indicated that a team exists for behavior support and planning and problem solving and 20% also indicated that school team has access to ongoing training and support from school. Feedback on action steps to improving practices included observing peers, collaborating on ideas that are challenging or not so challenging, and ongoing professional development and training. As part of the action plan, it was important for me to secure these resources and supports for teachers so that practices are effective. The outcome of these established practices led to immediate support for behavior that have the greatest impact. Teachers working together, sharing ideas, trying new strategies, and communicating contribute to a supportive school environment. I reflected on this during one of my grade level meetings:

During one of our GLM meeting today, the teachers and I were reflecting on a student whom they were having a meeting with in the morning. I buzzed their
classroom as I too needed to address the student’s behavior with his parents, too. After they met with student and his parents, apparently two more teachers met with student and his parents about his behavior. The parent was feeling frustrated but graciously acknowledged my teachers sense of urgency, collaborative work, and support for their child. I thought this was a concern on the student’s part but a celebration as teachers never sent this student to the office before. Instead, they were following protocol and collectively worked together on strategies to help student and I didn’t even have to facilitate this meeting. They all really cared about the student and wanted him to do well in school. To me, these are the kinds of collective responsibility shifts that I am seeing as a school in improving our supportive environment. I am feeling very proud of my staff. (written journal, October 16, 2018)

*Data supports decision making.* At the beginning of this research study, the only school supportive data I truly had was our 5Essentials, Behavior and Discipline particularly out of school suspensions, and off-track data. As part of our vision (habit #2), we wanted to decrease infractions and students sent to the office for behavior referral. However, there was no implementation assessment survey or office referral data (ODR) to help us make valid decision making as outlined in ensuring effectiveness of PBIS. I expressed this at the first phase of implementation.

Another critical component to effective implementation is to ensure that an implementation checklist or survey is completed. I felt I failed in this process as I was the only one talking to teachers and asking them to share their classroom
management system. I feel that having implementation data from staff will ensure that all members of the community is implementing the PBIS system with fidelity. (written journal, February 25, 2018)

As such, we put first things first and made sure that data collection became part of our daily practice (habit #3). In reviewing ODR data, I noticed that Tier 1 practices were not being implemented with fidelity.

In reflecting upon the student referrals after weeks have gone by, I noticed that certain teachers were sending students down and were not adhering to our classroom managed vs. office managed agreement. When students are referred to the office, my assumption is that teachers have already provided three reteaching opportunities. However, this was not always the case….. In continuing on with the implementation phase, I am being proactive and utilizing these critical components as I continue to reflect and engage school community. (written journal, March 10, 2018)

We also conducted a Positive Behavior System Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) to garner staff needs around PBIS implementation. The results provided me with information and next steps for the team. In addition, we were able to reflect on hard facts, discussions pertaining to the implementation process and system, and win-win (habit #4) decisions regarding focus areas that needed to be made.

An implementation SAS was created for staff members which focused on our school-wide matrix, discipline process, interventions, successes, and challenges. The survey also focused on school-wide systems, classroom systems, non-
classroom systems, and individual systems. Based on the results, a focus areas was ensuring a strong Tier 1 SEL as indicated by the weak response in the availability of the resources, interventions, and progress monitoring available, expected behaviors taught, consequences, office vs. classroom managed problem behaviors. (written journal, May 5, 2018)

In reflecting on the SAS data, for example, I noticed that only 46% felt that office vs. classroom managed behaviors are clear, 33% felt that consequences for problem behaviors were defined, 20% felt that data on problem behaviors were collected and summarized, and only 20% felt that they have access to on-going support from school. With this information, I was able to prioritize (habit #3) our needs as a school, secure financial support, and provide necessary resources that my staff needed in order for our students to be successful. With the additional resources, we were able to strengthen our Tier 1 SEL, reduce infractions and behavior referrals to the office as shared in this reflection:

We reviewed ODR data today during our BHT meeting. Although the data has decreased from last year, referrals are still ongoing and additional supports are still necessary. In discussing with the team and reflecting on the data, rather than varying students referred, the trend showed same students. In discussing the data using analysis protocol, it was determined that chronic behaviors required intensive support. Hence the counselor shared needs assessment from teachers and the supports that she will provide in small groups based on those needs. (written reflection, November 13, 2018)
Similarly, data analysis again was conducted again at the next BHT meeting. Data became part of our Agenda as this was an area of growth when team members reviewed SAS. Reviewing the data allowed us to reflect on our progress from our last meeting, prioritize needs, and determine next steps for continued success.

We reviewed ODR data again today during our BHT meeting today. The data decreased to 67 during the 2018-19 school year compared to 90 from last school year 2017-18. We analyzed the data deeper and determined that referrals are occurring for behaviors that were repeated with reteaching opportunities and strategies exhausted. I noticed supports are needed for students that are in need of Tier 3 support. In discussing with the team and reflecting on the data, we will be looking at outside resources as we do not have those supports available for our students. We revisited our vision, goals, and outlined action steps for the rest of the school year. I felt energized after the meeting... I felt a sense of purpose and most of all that we were moving in the right direction. (January 15, 2019)

*Systems support staff behavior.* As our team reflected on the data, we needed to determine next steps. According to the OSEP Technical Center PBIS (2015), systems help define what supports are needed to be effective and successful and implementation with fidelity. As such, our team reviewed our process, professional development training, resources and leadership in the implementation of our system. The implementation of PBIS and relational trust required synergy (habit #6) and for me to engage teachers, students, and parents. As I reflect on my journal entries, there was no
evidence at first of ongoing engagement as it pertains to the implementation process and relational trust. At the onset of the implementation process, I reflected on the first phase:

This first phase was establishing a team who would be committed to PBIS process and development. From our discussions and reflections from prior year experiences, we truly want our students to be socially and academically equipped with skills to help them become or be successful. Our matrix was a bit much and there was not a clear system on the discipline procedure. Additionally, reflections on data indicated that we were not clear nor practiced positive behavior expectations and transparent in our systems to implement with fidelity. In order for our students to be socially emotionally competent and academically successful, we needed to make sure we have an implementation system and research based practices that will enable our students to thrive every single day.

(written journal, January 7, 2018)

I then engaged the staff in effective system implementation and referral process particularly what would happen to students who continued to be referred to the office. I was not pleased to think about this step but knew that we had to be proactive (habit #1) and outline those necessary steps. It actually was important to outline the referral process as teachers need to understand the criteria and implement strategies first before considering referral. Overall, the teachers seemed content about this implementation system and process and actually excited as noted in the following reflection:

In addition to discussing what is the least effective in addressing discipline, we discussed how punitive responses do not work and that our goal was to ensure
students remain in classroom as much as possible. We also discussed what would be most effective which included teaching expected behaviors as if curriculum, practice them, and implement with fidelity. Of course the idea of repeated offense were brought up during the conversation. To me, we are already making the assumption that there will be repeated offenses. I wasn’t too pleased with that but knew my staff would need supports in this process. We discussed that there would be three re-teaching opportunities before students are referred to office and with administrators. The three re-teaching opportunities would include a self-reflection and parent-student-teacher conference. Teachers were enthusiastic about this process and to implement with their students. I remember one teacher indicated, “I can’t wait for this already.” (written journal, January 7, 2018)

Research Question #3

How can the 7 habits be used to inform leadership while support the school-wide implementation of PBIS?

In order to share my experiences on how the 7 habits can be used to inform leadership while support the school-wide implementation of PBIS, I had to examine each of the seven habits and how they align to each of the phases of PBIS implementation. According to Covey, “True leadership and success are founded on the personal growth and inner strength that come when people seek their inner self and the fundamental values that direct lives” (S. R. Covey, personal communication, April 1994). As such, I share how utilizing the seven habits and its fundamental values allowed me to stay focused and provided me direction during the implementation process.
The first phase of this research study required the establishment of a leadership team who are committed to the process and implementation of school-wide PBIS. This first phase required directing, planning, organizing, and goal setting. In an effort to improve our school supportive environment, effective leadership, and inspire trust, I needed to utilize the first three habits of independence. Habits #1 (be proactive), #2 (begin with the end in mind), and #3 (put first things first), required me to seek members that were committed to change our school-wide system. Before immediately diving into a new system, I wanted team members to reflect, understand, and value the need for change. In exercising this habit, we made a responsible choice of changing our system for the purpose of improving our practices school-wide.

Prior to sharing a new initiative and obtaining feedback, we discussed success and challenges we had the previous school years. From our discussions and reflections from prior year experiences, we truly want our students to be socially and academically equipped with skills to help them become or be successful. Our matrix was complex and the existing system did not clearly outline the discipline procedure. Additionally, reflections on data indicated that there was no clear nor practiced positive behavior expectations and transparent in our systems to implement with fidelity. In order for our students to be socially emotionally competent and academically successful, we needed to make sure we have an implementation system and research based practices that will enable our students to thrive every single day. (written journal, January 7, 2018)
Additionally, our team had a vision which included a much simpler PBIS matrix that would be utilized school-wide as well as a system that was clearly defined. As the development and implementation of our school-wide PBIS matrix was critical to our school supportive environment, we put first things first by coordinating supports for all stakeholders to ensure a successful implementation. The supports include professional development training for teachers, feedback from stakeholders, and monitoring for fidelity of implementation. As we now had a leadership team, the first feature of the PBIS framework for implementation, action plans which is another critical feature of the PBIS framework for implementation also became embedded in our Agenda. We held ourselves accountable by outlining action plans and reporting on them at the following meeting.

After this first phase of implementation, the second phase of this research study involved reflecting on the impact of proper training through professional development and workshops on best practices coupled by implementation with fidelity and communication to ensure transparency. This second phase required communicating, collaborating, problem solving, and decision making. In an effort to improve our relational trust by working together, I needed to utilize the next three habits of interdependence. Habits #4 (think win-win), #5 (seek first to understand before being understood), and #6 (synergy) required our team to work together in addition to being honest and fair. In the implementation of a school-wide PBIS, we were able to work together to develop best practices. In the development of these best practices, we sought the perspectives of other stakeholders through surveys to garner their feedback and to
ensure a fair system. We further utilized the surveys to communicate our action plan, find solutions to problems, and implement school-wide systems and practices with fidelity. When there were disagreements or other points of view, ensuring that we listen to other’s perspectives provided us the opportunity to have mutual agreements. Additionally, if we stumbled across a problem during implementation, we synergized and thought of other opportunities to ensure our students were successful and our staff were supported as in this reflection:

In discussing the office referral process, a few staff members and I were discussing what constitute an office referral. We discussed the three teaching opportunities and strategies. One teacher reiterated what she summarized which was that if students were given these opportunities and still do not respond appropriately that they would be sent to the office. Some agreed almost immediately with her but I questioned further. I wanted to seek her perspective and also provide my perspective from the lens of the students. Yes, we can follow the three step procedure but what’s in the heart of this whole process? I believe every situation requires seeking to understand. If we live by this value, we can overcome almost anything just by listening to other views and in the end everybody achieves, (written journal, February 20, 2018)

These interdependence habits allow individuals to communicate effectively with one another. Through communication, we develop empathetic listening and through empathetic listening, “we can really come to understand one another’s perspectives”
(Covey, 2013). As such, we are able to implement school-wide expectations fairly and with fidelity.

The last phase of the implementation process required data analysis through reflection. This last phase required analyzing and reflecting. In an effort to improve continuously, I needed to utilize the final habit of renewal. Habits #7 (sharpen the saw) required data analysis through reflection to garner critical information on the implementation development and next steps. In this phase, it was important to utilize the implementation checklist to revisit our goals, determine our focus, and action steps. Reflecting on the checklist data provides us the opportunity to define problems, refine our decisions, and make improvements. In this reflection, I shared my thoughts regarding an implementation survey that I regret to share that would be useful in the implementation process.

Therefore, another critical component to effective implementation is to ensure that an implementation checklist or survey is completed. I felt I failed in this process as I was the one talking to teachers and asking them to share their classroom management system. I feel that having implementation data from staff will ensure that all members of the community are implementing the PBIS system with fidelity. I learned that although we have a school-wide initiative, teachers need to make it meaningful for their classrooms through personalizing initiative to meet their needs. (written reflection, February 25, 2018)

However, after providing the TIC survey, we were able to analyze and reflect on our data results. We had hard facts to reflect on, data to discuss, and action plans to
create based on data needs. Overall, we were also able to celebrate our work, determine areas of concern, collaborate on alternatives, and fine tune our systems, practices, and resources.

A TIC survey was conducted to analyze our progress as a team, as a school, as individuals as well as to determine an action plan for the remaining school year. In reflecting on the results, I was proud that members felt that we have improved overall. Members shared that reporting teachers are provided Tier 1 resources and professional development and have taught and rewarded positive behaviors.

The feedback also indicated that although improved outcomes are evident, some teachers do need supports in strategies for chronic behaviors through restorative approaches and outside support form district/network. (written reflection, January 19, 2019)

**Research Question #4**

How have reflections on this self-study impact me as a school leader?

In order to share my experiences on how this self-study has impacted me as a school leader, I had to examine myself as a leader through this implementation process. As I examine my leadership skills, I had to reflect on me professionally and personally in this implementation process. As such, I share my leadership experience and the impact that those experiences have on me in my role as principal.

*I did not always utilize the 7 habits.* I experienced many challenges during these past fourteen months. While I value the 7 habits as a driving force in everything that I do, I actually was not always utilizing them. This is evident through the inconsistencies
as reflected in my written journal. The first phase of the implementation process required independence and self-leadership skills in directing, planning, organizing, and goal setting. This was profoundly successful as members supported and embraced our new school-wide behavior matrix. The next phase required interdependence and shared leadership as well as renewal to be effective. The skills of communicating, collaborating, problem solving, and decision making were critical in this implementation phase. It was in this phase that I noticed inconsistencies in my leadership skills. I was not always communicative in specific resources that were available to support the teachers as noted:

I recall feeling so upset that a teacher was sending the same student to the office but as I reflect on this particular student, what supports have I provided the teacher besides a one to one conversation to help the teacher understand the complexity of the situation and the lack of support for the student outside of school. This student also requires intensive support far more than the school can provide so what outside resources have I communicated or provided that support the work. (written journal, February 26, 2018)

Additionally, I was not always collaborating and problem solving with teachers on issues that required much attention. I noticed office referrals were increasing for example, but I didn’t seek assistance to make critical decisions on next steps from our team as noted in the following written journal entries:

Referrals although seemingly much less than last year continue to increase in certain classrooms. In reviewing our ODR data thus far, there are too many, 151 referrals. Students are frustrated with teachers and themselves and with each
other. The administration team is spending too much time putting out fires.

Teachers are in need of support. I feel that I am providing as much support as I possibly can but my hands are just tied. (March 24, 2018)

Synergy is another critical piece to an effective implementation of school-wide PBIS and expectations. Synergy is the ability to work together which requires respect, listening to other perspectives, mutual understanding, and cooperative learning (Covey, 2013). As I reflected on my written journal, I was not always utilizing the habit of synergizing:

As a school leader, I am always willing to learn and grow. As I look back on this school year, I am doing a lot as a school leader but there are times when I’m sitting in my office after a rough day and I feel I’m doing this work all on my own. It has been a tough school year for many reasons. I am not synergizing with others or collaborating as much as I should on critical areas. I needed help as I could not do this alone. (written journal, April 18, 2018)

Finally, sharpening the saw requires enhancing skills through renewal activities such as reading, exercising, and deep reflecting. I did not sharpen my saw when I needed to:

We had one of our school team meetings today and it was clear that some teachers did not quite comprehend the ODR process. We had to clarify the process and provide examples. I am appalled that several are confused about the reteaching steps and process in general. Why would you send a student to the office if you have not conferenced with their parents? I noticed that there are teachers
struggling with tier 1 SEL and supports are critical and necessary for Tier 2. I am growing frustrated by the lack of implementation and the support that teachers are provided with these past months. I need to really sharpen my saw this weekend.

(written journal. May 1, 2018)

The 7 habits are critical to me as a school leader. As I experienced many challenges during these past fourteen months, utilizing the 7 habits were critical in helping me become an effective leader. This is evident in the coherence, follow-up, communication, and collaborative work with members. During the first phase of the implementation process, effective self-leadership was critical to directing, planning, organizing, and goal setting as indicated in the be proactive (habit #1), begin with the end in mind (habit #2), and put first things first (habit #3). I believe this was a strength of mine as I really didn’t rely on anyone to carry out this initiative but worked with key members who were committed and skilled at this first phase of the implementation process:

In the first phase, the input from members of stakeholder groups were crucial. I appreciate their input as they often provide me a perspective that maybe I had not thought of or would consider. During the first phase, I believe that our supportive environment was off to a good start. Teachers seem excited, both students and parents know and understand simple expectations. This study is me reflecting on my leadership practices in the implementation of PBIS and relational trust. During this first phase, I feel that this initial stage has already impacted supportive environment. Teachers and students are speaking about the 3Bs. Everyone is
committed to the process and development of PBIS. (written journal, February 11, 2018)

When I utilized the seven habits, the next phase of interdependence and shared leadership as well as renewal was profoundly successful. In this shared leadership experience, I utilized the next three habits of effectiveness as I work cooperatively with others. The school-wide implementation process that involves training and professional development of best practices challenged me as a leader. The use of habits for interdependence steered me in the right direction as agreements and action plans were infused. I thought win-win with team members in implementing next steps:

I am grateful for our Behavioral Health Team (BHT) comprised of related support providers. This is critical to phase 2 of the implementation process. To ensure implementation with fidelity, the role of BHT members was to review systems and referrals from teachers. Communication is also key in the implementation process so I had to make sure that I was communicating to teachers and families for high office referrals to ensure that teachers are implementing best practices, seeking supports needed so that students do not consistently miss out on instruction, and providing next steps in the event that we have exhausted all interventions necessary. There is much work to do around this process and there are members who have expertise in this process. I am learning so much from my meetings. (written journal, May 4, 2018)

Occasionally, we encounter difficulties that are often hard to tackle. In seeking first to understand before being understood, I was able to have meaningful conversations
to address a problem. Although I did not have an immediate solution, we were able to discuss the issues and possible alternatives. At the end of it all, everyone leave with a mutual understanding and respect for one another:

As I reflect on this last quarter of the school year and working with team members who are willing and able without a questionable doubt has been impactful in terms of our school supportive environment and relational trust. Members come to the table with the seek first to understand mindset, are solution oriented, and are truly there for the success of all members of the school especially our students. A teacher approached me yesterday and wanted to let me know that she first appreciated me but also shared her problem with discipline issue and wanted my assistance to resolve. I did not have a solution immediately, but we were able to talk it out, brainstorm ideas to try, and eventually she left supported. The teacher was seeking to understand which make others want to listen with the intent to solve problems. I thought that if we can only all behave this way we will be able to solve any problem. (written journal, May 12, 2018)

While think win-win and seeking to understand are critical to the second phase of the implementation process, the ability of all members to work cooperatively was necessary to achieve effectiveness. In utilizing the habit of synergy, we were able to achieve common goals.

During one of our grade level meetings yesterday, the teachers and I were reflecting on a student whom we were concerned with. A meeting was arranged the next day by the teachers. I buzzed their classroom as I too needed to address
the student’s behavior with his parents, too. After they met with student and his parents, apparently two more teachers met with student and his parents about his behavior. The parent was feeling frustrated but graciously acknowledged my teachers sense of urgency, collaborative work, and support for their child. I thought this student was never sent to the office. I then thought teachers were following protocol and collectively worked together on strategies to help student. They all really cared about student and wanted him to do well in school. To me, these are the kinds of collective responsibility shifts that I am seeing as a school in improving our supportive environment. I am feeling very proud of my staff.

(written journal, October 16, 2018)

Covey (2013) outlines exercising our physical, social emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being as sharpening our saw. As I reflected on the first year of implementation, I practiced sharpening the saw by allowing myself to accept what has happened already and to focus on what lies ahead as opportunities for renewal:

I spent a lot of time reading this summer. I read a lot of articles on school leadership. I read resources to support my work. I read the 7 Habits book again. There’s a lot I was not doing as a school leader that I regret. I was not as proactive as I should have been. It was hard to put first things first when that first thing were major disciplines that required my support daily leaving me out of the classroom and supporting my teachers. I take this reflection as a boost to do better. (written journal, August 10, 2018)
In sharpening the saw through professional reading and reflection, I was able to accept my failures as a school leader. More importantly, I am able to move forward with confidence and the ability to tackle what lies ahead.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This final chapter provides discussions, conclusions, and recommendations based on the results and findings of the study. The purpose of this self-study was to examine ways that I as a principal engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. The first part of this chapter will share a summary of the findings on my experiences in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust and common school-wide PBIS and expectations. Thereafter, I will share a summary of the findings from my own personal experiences through reflection on the impact of PBIS and relational trust on the school supportive environment and student achievement. This chapter will also share a summary of the findings through my reflection of how the seven habits were used to informed and support school-wide implementation of PBIS as well as how this self-study impacted me as a school leader. This chapter will conclude with limitations addressed to successfully engage the school community in the application of the seven habits to support the school-wide implementation of PBIS and implications for school leaders. Recommendations for other school leaders when applying best practices in their schools will also be shared.
Discussion and Conclusion

This section of the chapter provides a summary of the findings to address the research questions of this study.

The following research questions will be examined in this self-study dissertation.

- What are my experiences in engaging the school community in building a positive learning environment and relational trust conducive to students’ social emotional learning needs?
- How can my leadership impact the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide and impact school supportive environment and student achievement?
- How can the 7 habits be used to inform leadership while support the school-wide implementation of PBIS?
- How have reflections on this self-study impact me as a school leader?

A summary of the findings are described in each component of the research questions.

Engaging the Community

Engaging the community is critical to effective implementation of any change. The key to my inspiring trust was to engage the community in building trust. “Trust between principal and teachers, administrators and school staff, parents and staff, teachers and students, and among students is essential for schools to improve” (Von Frank, 2010, p. 1). Additionally, leaders must inspire trust before any effective change implementation (Covey, 2015). In this research study and reflecting on my experiences, I had to inspire that trust through collaborative work with community members before the
change process. Furthermore, inspiring that trust required the use of the first three habits of independence and practices that we all need to be effective. In doing so, I was able to have staff members revisit our values, outline what was important to us, and hold ourselves accountable. I inspired teachers to be proactive (habit #1). After reflecting on building a positive and supportive learning environment, we had to revisit our practices as individuals. As we reflected on our practices which indicated a need to improve school-wide, I had to conduct an honest and open discussion at the start of the school year of who we are and what we wanted to be as a school. We knew that improving our school supportive environment specifically on our PBIS systems was our priority. Rethinking what was truly important to us allowed us to begin with the end in mind (habit #2) or develop a vision of where we wanted to be and the changes that needed to happen. As indicated in Chapter II, effective implementation for any change, requires engagement by members of the school and the very essence of engagement is building trust where members have a mutual understanding of their respected roles and responsibilities in order to be effective as indicated in the first phase of implementation. Additionally, respect, personal regard for others, competence, and integrity are critical in building trust in a school organization (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). Hence, I had to conduct difficult conversations, be vulnerable, accept constructive feedback, and be open to suggestions. Through our collaborative and trusting efforts, we developed a vision for a new PBIS system that was accepted by all members. Having this vision further allowed us to put first things first (habit #3) by outlining action steps to achieve our vision. In outlining our action steps, we utilized the PBIS process to outline our action steps which
included data analysis, interventions and resources, professional development, training, and communicating with all stakeholders in order for effective implementation to occur. Von Frank (2010) also shared that cultivating trust include the principal being reflective, building relationships before tasks, trusting teachers to make decisions, providing opportunities for multiple teacher interactions, listening, and creating a vision for effectiveness. I cultivated that relational trust through interactions by inviting members to be part of the team and ensuring that members were actively involved in the development of the new PBIS system, and decision making. The first three habits of independence allowed me to cultivate trust with members which in turn inspired them to do the same. The conditions that I provided as a school leader specifically the social interactions supported relational trust amongst members (Bryk & Schneider, 2003) which is a key factor in building a positive learning environment through implementation of relational trust which further supports the first purpose of this self-study.

In continuing with effective implementation, the PBIS Blueprint Framework required team members to coordinate practices and systems to ensure fidelity of implementation. This coordination included measurable outcomes, evidenced based practices, data for decision making, and implementation system. In the school in this research study, I worked with members to understand the school-wide matrix, listen to other perspectives, organize training and teaching to all stakeholders, lead professional development, and plan initiatives. Such coordination involved the collaboration of all stakeholders which required the habits of interdependence and practices that ensure people work effectively together. In the implementation process, we had to utilize think
win-win (habit #4) in developing the school-wide matrix systems and practices that were fair and benefited everyone. While analyzing data, school-wide expectations, interventions, best practices, equity, fairness, and aligning systems school-wide, we didn’t always immediately agree. As outlined in the PBIS Implementation Blueprint Framework (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education, 2015), one of the critical elements for effective implementation is measurable outcomes and ensuring that each member has shared values in terms of outcomes for a positive learning environment. By listening to others and seeking first to understand then be understood (habit #5) we came to mutual decisions regarding indicators for behaviors that are conducive and foundational to a positive learning environment. Having this shared values of outcomes allowed us to remain focus on our course as well as to establish the second element of the PBIS Blueprint Framework, interventions and strategies to achieve out desired outcomes. We synergized (habit #6) as we planned training and workshops for teachers, students, and parents as well as teaching best practices, strategies, and interventions for school-wide implementation with fidelity. Another critical element to the PBIS Blueprint Framework is data. In this study, data was utilized as we monitored supports for teachers, office referrals, and our PBIS practices. Reflecting on Agenda items, exit slips, surveys, and discipline data helped us determine specific areas, persons, or settings that were successful as well as challenging. Having this data element allowed us to sharpen our saw (habit #7) when improving practices through social emotional reflections and renewal through new learning. In sharpening our saw, we focused on the element of systems where we reflected on our implementation of interventions and
strategies, use of data and overall outcome. These three habits of interdependence and renewal habit of clarifying purpose, aligning systems, and unleashing talent allowed me to stay engaged and collaborate with stakeholders. It was through this engagement and collaborative work that I was able to earn trust with my community and further build a positive learning environment. Once we were able to build a positive learning environment through relational trust, I was able to collaborate with them in the implementation of a common school-wide PBIS and expectations. The elements of the PBIS Blueprint Framework that I utilized as a school leader specifically measurable outcomes, evidenced based practices, data for decision making and implementation systems were critical in building a positive learning environment through implementation of PBIS which further supports the second purpose of this self-study.

**Impact on Supportive Environment and Student Achievement**

The impact of the implementation of PBIS and relational trust school-wide required me to investigate my leadership effectiveness and our school environment as a whole. I discovered that our school environment was at risk as indicated by our supportive environment data and I also need to be more effective in my leadership skills as indicated by our effective leader data. In response to this sense of urgency, I utilized the PBIS Implementation Blueprint and the 7 habits framework to guide successful and effective implementation. The PBIS Implementation Blueprint framework provides key principles for successful implementation to include measurable outcomes, evidenced based practices, data for decision making, and implementation system. The use of these principles and alignment to the seven habits allowed me to effectively implement PBIS
school-wide and further resulted in a positive impact on supportive environment and student achievement.

The first principle was measurable outcomes which is defined as the “academic and behavior targets or indicators that are specified, endorsed, and monitored because of their social and education significance” (PBIS Blueprint Framework, 2015, p. 20). Prior to this research study, there were no processes or vision for measurable outcomes in the implementation of positive behavior system school-wide. As a result, the development of a school-wide PBIS required a vision and action plan for effective implementation. Sugai and Horner (2002) outlined critical phases of implementation in successful implementation of PBIS framework school-wide which were utilized in this research study. The first of these phases was the establishment of a leadership team. As such, I had to be proactive (habit#1) and begin with the end in mind (habit #2) in the first phase of the implementation process by establishing the leadership team. In doing so, our team was able to create a vision of school-wide PBIS that was simple yet comprehensive to all stakeholders. With a school-wide vision, we were able to determine our needs and measurable outcomes as a school.

The next principle was evidenced based practices which is defined as “interventions and strategies that are evidenced-based in achieving indicated outcomes” (PBIS Blueprint Framework, 2015, p. 20). Prior to our new PBIS systems, it was difficult for teachers, students, and parents to verbalize school-wide expectations. According to Sugai and Horner (2002), the next phase was school-wide agreements and supports through instituting action steps and supports for maximizing success. It was
important to reduce infractions and office discipline referrals by outlining a simple yet comprehensive system including a referral process that included three reteaching opportunities as well as providing supports and training for staff. Through proper training and professional development, we were able to teach, model, and practice expected behaviors. Additionally, there were added interventions and resources to implement effectively and support teachers instructionally. There were times that we didn’t all agree on expected interventions but there was always a third alternative, a win-win (habit #4), in implementation process and addressing behaviors. Teachers, students, and parents shared their perspectives in the implementation of PBIS system. From the perspective of most teachers, the PBIS system outlines expected behaviors that are taught and rewarded regularly, problem behaviors and consequences are defined clearly, and that procedures are in place for behavioral occurrence. I had members think of a win-win when discussing supports for chronic behaviors such as other staff members or options for students. From the perspective of students, the school-wide 3Bs was an easy system and they were able to explain when asked what they are. Students offered ideas to post large prints school-wide which was a win-win allowing the matrix to be visible to all areas of the school building. From the perspective of parents, the 3Bs is utilized at home and they appreciate the home and school connection. Furthermore, they are able to utilize the 3Bs at home which has been impactful in addressing behaviors at home.

The next principle was data for decision making which is defined as “information that is used to select, monitor, and evaluate outcomes, practices, and systems” (PBIS Blueprint Framework, 2015, p. 20). Data collection was not initially part of our positive
behavior system. However, we had to utilize baseline data, the 5Essentials, to create a vision and action plan. According to Sugai and Horner (2002), this critical phase of conducting analysis and monitoring was critical in determining focus areas for improvement. Through this analysis, I was seeking to understand (habit #5) our implementation system and process. Data became part of our process as I closely monitored our effective teaming, implementation school-wide, and impact on student achievement. Data analysis allowed me to celebrate our success such as increase of on-track and reduction of office discipline referrals but also focus on areas of improvement. For example, in reflecting on our mid-year office discipline referrals and on-track data, I noticed a reduction in referrals but also noticed where supports are needed such as tiered academic and SEL instruction, systems refinement, and chronic behavior support for similar students. Having this information allows us to prioritize our needs and determine next steps for continued success such as refining our tier 2 implementation process, equity and fairness, and ensuring that everyone is provided the instructional support to be effective in addressing chronic behaviors and to ensure that students are in classrooms learning.

Finally, implementation system was another principle defined as “supports that are needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of practices, efficient use of data, and achievement of outcomes” (PBIS Blueprint Framework, 2015, p. 20). According to Sugai and Horner (2002), this phase of implementation with fidelity required collaboration, professional development, and consistent reinforcers. As such, I had to put first things first (habit #3) by ensuring that proper training, practicing, and
monitoring expected behaviors were infused. This was done through professional
development with community members, communicating and modeling school-wide
expectations, and ongoing implementation surveys. The implementation system is
critical as we have developed measurable outcomes, implementation of practices, and
efficient use of data. Our Behavioral Health Team members are critical to this
implementation system as we synergized (habit #6) on core principles through ongoing
data analysis of implementation survey and assessment, office discipline referrals, and
on-track data, as well as collaborating with other members in effective strategies for
teaching and learning rather than removing challenging students from the classroom
setting which negatively impacts their academics (Cohen, 2016). In summary, the
implementation of PBIS and relational trust impacted school supportive environment and
student achievement. The use of key principles from the PBIS Blueprint for effectiveness
aligned to the 7 habits framework resulted in a decrease in office referrals from 20
classrooms to eight classrooms with referrals as well as 0% suspensions compared to .2%
last year and an improvement in on-track academic achievement as indicated by the
increase in on-track data at each 5th week marking period compared to each 5th week
marking period last year.

The 7 Habits

At the beginning of this research study, I had a vision of what this study would
entail and a course of action that would lead in the right direction. However, that
direction shifted as I encountered obstacles. I had to reflect on me as a school leader and
my practices. Samaras and Freese (2009) indicates that openness, collaboration, and
reframing are critical as we examine ourselves in practice. Through this openness, collaboration, and reframing, I was able to utilize the 7 habits of highly effective people to inform and support the school-wide implementation of PBIS. I share my perspectives and experiences for renewal of the program, professional, and personal practices.

In reflecting on school-wide PBIS, the 7 habits were utilized to inform and support the effective implementation at each phase of the process. The first phase required the establishment of a leadership team that was committed to the entire process. During this first phase, team members were engaged in directing, planning, organizing, and goal setting requiring the use of the first three habits of independence. I had to first build relational trust with members. I utilized being proactive (habit #1) by first building that trust through openness, reflection, and helping members understand the value for change.

When there’s trust, researchers say, people are more likely to innovate because they feel less vulnerable and alone, they give leaders more latitude because they believe in the leader’s intentions, and people are able to coalesce around action plan, leading to more progress in reform. (Von Frank, 2010, p. 2)

In this phase, I had to have team members reflect on who we are as a team, as a school, and what we wanted to be allowing us to reflect on our values which further helped us in our commitment to change. Once I developed that trust and commitment for change, we were able to collaborate on action steps, our vision or end in mind (habit #2) resulting on a new, improved school-wide PBIS matrix that was fair and applicable to everyone. Additionally, I also had to put first things first (habit #3) in the implementation process
through organizing professional development and training. In this phase, resources and instructional support were outlined as needs and finances were secured to ensure successful implementation at the second phase.

The second phase required the proper training through professional development and workshops on best practices in addition to effective implementation. This second phase involved communicating, collaborating, problem solving, and decision making requiring the use of the next three habits of interdependence. I utilized think win-win (habit #4) by collaborating on best practices and finding a fair, school-wide system for everyone resulting in the successful development of the three Bs. Coordinating this professional development and training allowed all members to develop a school-wide PBIS system that was simple but comprehensive of what we valued as a school and team during the first phase. Additionally, I utilized office referral data and surveys during team meetings as we seek first to understand before being understood (habit #5) by listening and reflecting on other perspectives regarding the implementation process. Through the survey results, I reflected with team members on areas of celebrations and areas of concern such as supports needed for staff for effective implementation. By having this information, I was able to synergize (habit #6) with our Behavioral Health Team regarding supports for students and staff to be successful in this second phase.

The third phase required data analysis through reflection for an effective implementation. This third phase involved analyzing and reflecting requiring the use of renewal habit. I utilized sharpen the saw (habit #7) by analyzing and reflecting on self-assessment surveys and team implementation checklist. Through the survey results, I
was able to determine areas of celebrations and areas of concern such as supports needed for chronic behaviors. By having this information, I was able to have collaborate with our Behavioral Health Team on practices needed for students and staff to be successful in the implementation process.

**Impact on Me as a School Leader**

Samaras and Freese (2009) states that the purpose of self-study is personal renewal, professional renewal, and program renewal through the process of reflection. Feldman (2003) adds that “self-study researchers do this by doing research on the self, research on the self in practice, and by doing research to understand oneself in practice” (p. 46). As I reflect on this self-study, my personal, professional, and program practices have been impacted as a school leader. I am not who I was as a leader when I first started this research study. In this self-study methodology, I was able to deeply reflect on processes and results which helped me understand myself as a school leader, discover new ideas, and further improve my practice.

Personally, I have always valued the seven habits and believed that I live by each of them. At the first phase of this study, my strengths were the habits of independence: be proactive, begin with the end in mind, and put first things first. This was evident in my ability to inspire trust towards a new PBIS system by engaging the community prior to the change implementation. In doing so, my independence and self-leadership skills resulted in members planning, organizing, and setting goals. The second phase required interdependence and skills for communicating, collaborating, problem solving, and decision making. It was in this phase that I experienced challenges while working with
others. These challenges included lack of communication for supports, collaborating and problem solving through difficult times, and enhancing skills for improved practice. In reflecting on my leadership skills in this phase of the research study, I was able to understand myself professionally as a school leader which was I did not always practice what I preached. As I reflect on my written journals, surveys, data, and critical friend interviews, I was not implementing PBIS systems and structures with fidelity. I did not communicate supports because there was none so I needed to work with others to develop these supports. I did not collaborate or problem solve with teachers because I did not take the time to do so. I could not do this work alone and I became frustrated.

I also know that I don't have all the answers that I do struggle with this process and that you know it takes a team and to do that it takes us meeting together and collaborate on ideas. And now that I'm thinking about it, that does not happen often as I think I need to. I need to do that that. (critical friend interview 1, March 1, 2018)

However, I was and am able to pause and revisit my independence habits as I further improve my professional practice. I needed the effort and support of everyone. It required interdependence habits and practices for effective implementation. As such, I had to take a step back and revisit my use of the 7 habits particularly the interdependence habits. In doing so, I took the initiative to actively and constantly engage team members through ongoing meetings, surveys, and data analysis. It was through this collaborative effort that I was able to collaboratively plan professional development because I knew what we needed as a school and provide training to all members. Additionally, I was able
to conduct difficult conversations by reflecting on data analysis to address areas of concerns and mutually agree upon solutions to help solve problems. I was also able to reflect on improved efforts for sustainability of our success in the implementation process. In doing so, I was able to discover new ideas, systems, and processes that only resulted in the greatest impact on me personally and professionally in my practice.

I have been better I must say. I live by the 7 habits in the implementation of PBIS school-wide. I realized that while I didn’t always use the 7 habits at the initial implementation, it is absolutely critical to my work as a school leader. I needed to change that. I accepted my failures and sought renewal. That was tough on me personally but I needed that to be better and stronger at what I do. I embrace collaboration, thinking, listening, problems, problem solving, and finding solutions. I value the implementation of a school-wide positive behavior system and the use of the habits in the process and in all processes and it has absolutely made a difference. (critical friend interview, January 23, 2019)

As a school leader, this self-study further impacted my confidence as a leader. Knowing and understanding effective implementation of PBIS systems and aligning and utilizing the seven habits supports my work and allows me to continuously learn and improve our program, practice, and process. Covey (2008) states that the seven habits are ubiquitous which means it is built into everything that one does. The use of the seven habits was not only critical in my implementation of behavior system but other programs, practices, and processes school-wide. That ubiquitous approach has been my daily tool as a school leader and has thus empowered me to lead.
Limitations Addressed

In this research study, limitations addressed include the self-study methodology, varying capacities for stakeholders in the implementation the PBIS framework and the use of the seven habits, and external factors.

The first limitation is the self-study methodology which requires me to be reflective of me as a researcher. As my data was limited to self-reflections, I made sure to have multiple data points to triangulate my data such as public data for my school district, critical friend interviews, and survey reflections. Self-reflections are a powerful tool as we analyze who we are and what we are doing in the process and having multiple data points provides various information on the overall impact of the implementation process on supportive environment and academic achievement. Bias is an important piece to this self-study and I must address my own biases as a researcher. Utilizing my reflection journal and critical friend interviews as tools to address my biases that stem from the study provides various perspectives on my experiences in engaging the school community and my leadership impact.

The second limitation is the varying capacities for stakeholders in the implementation the PBIS framework systems and the use of the 7 habits. Due to the availability of resources, we did not have immediate supports available in the form of social emotional learning curriculum and professionals at the initial state. I engaged in difficult conversations about equity and race but the training and support I provided around this critical aspect was limited. As such, teachers did not have those resources and experienced personnel or behavioral team to lean on when teaching expectations and
experiencing challenging behaviors. I believe having these at the onset of implementation would have further improved our systems and processes at the infancy implementation phase. In addressing this limitations, additional resources such as social emotional learning curriculum and development of a Behavioral Health Team were provided during the third phase where reflections on the data indicated a high need for additional resources. As a result and based on my reflections, there was a reduction in office discipline referrals.

Finally, external factors was another limitation in the implementation the PBIS framework and the 7 habits. There are many external factors that impact implementation of positive behavior system and use of habits. First is the belief in both PBIS and 7 habits. If one believes in its process, it will be embraced and implemented with fidelity. But if one does not believe in its process, one will challenge it and there will be holes in the implementation process. The second external factor is the parents’ approach to discipline. If the approach is one that is aligned to the school, it can and will be successful. However, children come from various backgrounds and their parents’ approach to discipline may not always coincide with the school. Some may believe in the zero tolerance policy or “my way is the highway.” This makes it difficult when teaching, learning, and collaborating on the implementation process. In addressing this limitation, training and communication of school-wide PBIS was applied to ensure that our school-wide system was clearly defined and implemented school-wide. Additionally, a leadership team also actively engaged in 7 habits activities and implementation school-wide.
Implications and Recommendations for School Leaders

There are implications for school leaders in the implementation of the PBIS framework and the use of the 7 habits. As a result of these implications are recommendation for school leaders. In my journey to successfully engage the school community in the application of the 7 habits to support school-wide implementation of PBIS and relational trust, I experienced challenges that I thought could have been alleviated and success that require future research. I thought the initial first phase which was independence was mostly a success as I reflected on our planning and commitment to implementing PBIS school-wide. That plan included proper training and professional development. It was in this second phase that I encountered challenges because there were multiple people that were involved in the process. As I reflect on my written journal, data, and critical friend interview, it was evident that I was frustrated with the amount of students that were being referred to the office and the lack of support for staff to address behaviors. This phase required interdependence and working collaboratively with those that were involved in the process. At this phase initially, there were limited or lack of supports and I was not collaborating with others with a sense of urgency required. I noticed inconsistencies in systems and structures, lack of evidenced based practices, supports, and data analysis. However, when systems and structures as well as professional resources and supports were in place and difficult conversations occurred, the referrals decreased and academic achievement increased. I was able to have ongoing communication on what was working and what was not by reflecting on data. I was able to problem solve during the most difficult challenges and overcome the challenges with
collaborative support. Teachers not only had tools and resources, but understood challenges students faced. In the end, I was able to work with them to tackle these challenges. As such, it is critical to implement PBIS school-wide with fidelity.

Although I did experiences challenges, a success I experienced was that applying the seven habits in other school programs and practices has been successful. As a school leader, we encounter many obstacles daily. These obstacles can range from increased tardiness, grading policy, financial constraints, bus transportation, and parent complaints to name a few. By utilizing the 7 habits framework to address the challenges. I was able to utilize the practices of independence, interdependence, and renewal to guide my work. For example, by utilizing the habits of independence, I anticipated these challenges before they even existed and thus was able to prevent them from occurring. By utilizing the habits of interdependence, I was able to involve others in problem solving and engage in difficult conversations to address behaviors. I am able to have thought partners and alternatives in handling any situation and coming up with solutions. With the entire body involved and ensuring time for reflection in various aspects, I am able to determine critical areas for improvement. It is in these independence, interdependence, and renewal practices that I have developed a stronger sense of confidence as I tackle the everyday challenges of being a school principal. As such, the 7 habits when used ubiquitously are critical to school leaders.

In my ongoing commitment to this research study, there are three focus areas for next steps for me as a school leader. The first step includes researching effective Tier 2 and 3 interventions and strategies. This is currently a challenge for our school as we
encounter students with chronic trauma. Teachers are in need of support in managing severe social emotional behaviors caused by trauma. From our experience, appropriate professional training would support our staff in implementing effective strategies for de-escalation to better understand and respond to such challenging behaviors. The second step is to gather additional qualitative data for example from teacher, student, and parent surveys. This qualitative data would allow for more information from various perspectives. Additionally, quantitative data gathered for example from interventions or resources such as behavior charts would provide information on root causes of behaviors. The third step includes focusing on the second part of the PBIS Implementation Blueprint framework of Self-Assessment and Action Planning. This process will require me to utilize the Evaluation Blueprint for School-Wide Positive Behavior Support. Developed by the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2010), the purpose of the Evaluation Blueprint is to evaluate the establishment of the PBIS program and ways to improve it. The framework includes asking the right questions, using the right data to find answer and measure, and using the right information to create and distribute reports to help make decisions regarding the program’s continuing effectiveness. In this process, no new principles will be added but instead the principles of measureable outcomes, evidenced based practices, data for decision making, and implementation system will be evaluated. The evaluation model will utilize core indicator questions to include context (who, where, when, why implementation occurred), input (what directs school-wide PBS implementation), fidelity (implementation in place), and the impact on social and academic behavior outcomes
(National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, 2010). Finally, the evaluation data will be utilized to determine PBIS program needs, supports, and next steps. This will help us further in planning action steps to support our school supportive environment and academic achievement school-wide.

In the interest of this research study for future dissertators, recommendations include extending data to include additional varying data points. Recommendations to the extension of this research study could include a comparison and contrast of schools that utilize and do not utilize Leader in Me and/ or PBIS system. For example, researchers can compare schools that utilizes both PBIS and Leader in Me in various locations and compare and contrast other schools that utilizes PBIS but not Leader in Me. Researchers can compare and contrast the implementation of PBIS system in those varying schools.

**Summary and Final Thoughts**

The purpose of this self-study was for me to examine and identify ways that I as a principal can engage the school community in building a positive learning environment through the implementation of relational trust and school-wide PBIS and expectations. At the beginning of this research study, I was empowered to make a change personally and professionally. This required me to be vulnerable as I investigated my leadership effectiveness. I felt positive and ready to embrace what lies ahead of me because I cared about my school and my students. I was willing to learn and be an effective leader. I chose the 7 habits framework not only because it was already embedded in our school, but because I embraced the 7 habits. As a school leader, wife, mother, and doctoral
student, the seven habits are critical to my work and life balance. When the seven habits was first introduced to me, I wasn’t quite sure what it entailed. And honestly, not all staff members were 100% sold but a majority were including me. However, I was at a point in my life where I wanted to learn something new and I embraced the seven habits instantly. When you really think about it, the seven habits are everything one would need to be able to function successfully whether independently or with others. I decided to make that commitment because I value the seven habits and the process behind it. During this research process though, I discovered challenges that I had to face. In reflecting upon my experiences and while I value the seven habits as a driving force in everything that I do, I actually was not always utilizing them. I had to take a huge step back and revisit who I was and what I wanted to be. In doing so, I was able to discover new ideas, systems, and processes that only resulted in the greatest impact on me personally and professionally in my practice.

This research study has been focused on the seven habits and implementation of PBIS. But overall, this research study taught me to live and value the habits. What I have found is that the seven habits have helped me grow not only professionally as a school leader in my effort to improve our school supportive environment, but also personally in my daily life experiences. When a car honks at me while I am driving or when an individual cuts in front of me in the grocery line, I am not reactive. When my daughters argue with each other or with me or my husband, we listen to understand one another and eventually have a win-win, mutual decision. When I am so stressed out, I stop what I am doing and sharpen my saw. Because I live by these habits, I feel
confident in myself and with others. I embrace every problem as an opportunity to grow, learn, and lead. Covey (2008) says that the 7 habits is ubiquitous and happening all the time. My hope is that I model that ubiquity and instill that in my school community. My hope is to share my experiences with those around me so that they too are empowered to lead successful lives.
APPENDIX A

SELF-STUDY DATA PROTOCOLS JOURNAL PROMPTS
Self-Study Data Collection Protocols

Reflection Journal Prompts

The following is a list of possible questions for journal entries. I will utilize these questions as I reflect on my leadership experience in the PBIS and 7 habits implementation process.

- Why is it so important to build relational trust?
- How is the 7 Habits critical to my leadership practices?
- What impact does this study have on supportive environment for each of my stakeholder groups at the first phase? Second phase? Third phase?
- What impact does this study have on the academic achievement of students?
- How has my staff changed in the implementation process?
- What am I seeing as critical to effective implementation?
- What supports does my community need in the process?
- What is the most challenging part of this process?
- How have I changed as a school leader in this process?
- What do I as school leader need to do to ensure this process continues to be successful?
APPENDIX B

SELF-STUDY DATA PROTOCOLS INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Self-Study Data Collection Protocols
Critical Friend Interview Questions

The critical friend that was part of this self-study is also a school administrator in an elementary magnet school. My critical friend will ask me questions outlined below as well as additional follow up questions as deemed necessary to challenge my thinking or to provide me with feedback. The questions are as follows:

1. Explain the phases of your implementation process?
2. Describe your success so far in the implementation process?
3. What challenges are you encountering and root cause?
4. Tell me about your staff in this implementation process and changes you notice about them?
5. Tell me about your students in this implementation process and changes you notice about them?
6. Tell me about you as a school leaders in this implementation process and changes you notice about yourself as a school leader?
7. What shifts are you going to make in this next phase of the implementation process?
APPENDIX C

DATA ANALYSIS PROTOCOL
**Document Analysis Protocol**

The following is a document analysis protocol to determine if and when I implement the 7 habits in each phase of the implementation process. I will utilize this protocol as I reflect on my leadership experiences when engaging the community and implementing various phases of the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document analysis (circle one)</th>
<th>Journal Entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agendas and Meeting Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional Development Materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How does the document engage school community?

### What phase of the PBIS implementation process does the document align to?

### Which of the 7 habits does this document align to?

### What impact does this document have on supportive environment and/or academic achievement?

### What impact does this document have on me as a school leader?

### What types of data do I and my staff need in order to facilitate implementation of 7 Habits and PBIS?
APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPT OF CRITICAL FRIEND INTERVIEW 1
Critical Friend Interview 1
Transcribed by Voice Recorder

Critical Friend: Describe your success so far in the implementation process.

Researcher: We have a team who met before the school year began. Our success so far is that we really wanted to revamp our own behavior system to make it more meaningful for the students, to make it much simpler. We had a behavior matrix system that I felt was too complex for everyone to understand – adults didn’t refer to it often and students could not explain it clearly when asked. It didn’t quite resonate with kids or teachers as they could not describe expectations fully.

This year we wanted to offer a system with a few major components and one that was simple enough for everyone to understand. This year we focused on three major own expectations: Be respectful, Be responsible, and Be safe. We call this the 3Bs. We outlined and created what that would look like in various parts of the building whether it is recess, classrooms, the hallways, bathrooms, and so forth.

One success is that there is the 3 Bs it's all intertwined in various school areas. Whether it is the classroom or the hallway and so forth, there are the 3Bs at each of those places. Everybody knows and understands what it is and can describe the expectations. The behavior matrix is posted all over the school which we didn't have before.

Another success is that kids remember it. They know what the 3Bs are and what they are expected to do. For example, if I or we redirect them or their behavior, they can identify if they were not being respectful, responsible, or safe. They can explain why there weren’t respectful for example and what that means. That is a success so far and again they know it, it's school-wide and everybody knows it. Everyone is using the same exact 3Bs system in their classroom, in specials. So that's been successful.

Critical Friend: Any other success such as the number of students sent to the office?

I would also say that there's been a reduction in the number students sent to the office. I think it’s because we practiced the 3Bs at the beginning of the year. Prior to the school year, we train
teachers in utilizing the 3Bs and then we taught the students what the expectations are so we've seen the decrease.

Critical Friend: You said teachers trained so what did that look like?

Researcher: During the professional development, the teachers that were involved in the creation of this were the ones that provided the PD where examples were given of what behaviors would look like and what classroom managed vs. office managed behavior looks like. We also did a presentation for the students during a schoolwide assembly which we did not do in the past so that's how we trained our teachers and students.

Critical Friend: How did you determine who would be in the initial committee or team? Was it voluntary?

Researcher: It was important to make sure that everyone in the school was represented so we have a member of the K-w team, a member in the 3-5 team, a member in the 6-8 team, a member in the SPED team. Basically all the SPED teachers are part of this as we know that they're strategies thinking was important. So that was how it was determined.

Critical Friend: What challenges are you encountering so far?

Researcher: We were off to a great start. We noticed we had minimal office discipline referrals office. Recently though, what I've noticed recently is there's been an increase. So kids are being sent down to the office for what would be considered classroom managed behavior. For example, a student was sent down to the office because she was assumed to have been eating chips in the classroom. But when I speak to the student, she really had it her pocket so that she can have it after school for a snack. The teacher did not have a conversation as they were supposed to in terms of addressing behavior. I believe just having a conversation, our goal for this was that student stay in a classroom learning. But I am seeing it again and they are just getting sent to the office for something like that without speaking to them.

Critical Friend: Do you think it’s time to maybe have a refresher with the staff?

Researcher: Yes, I think that it is time once again. We are in the midyear process and people are not following our behavior protocol. The first one is reteaching the behavior at the first occurrence. The
second occurrence would be that the student complete a self-
reflection and the reflection goes home signed by the parent and at
the third occurrence they are supposed to call and contact the
parent for a conference. However, with the students coming down
with an office referral, I noticed that they had no prior referrals
(some of them) and teachers are not following protocol. So I think
that I am in this process right now where we have to revisit those
protocols and expectations.

Another challenge is that we don't have time to meet together. We
do not have our weekly schoolwide meeting that we've done in the
past and we lack our full day PD because to compensate for the 15
minute morning prep. I think that if we had that we would be able
to reflect and get better in the implementation process.

Critical Friend: Have you noticed any changes in the staff? At the beginning, there
was more consistency but now they are reverting to former
behavior. When they were doing it well, what changes did you
noticed in your staff?

Researcher: Well, when they were doing it well, I noticed that they continued
to refer to behavior matrix but what I also noticed was that they
were building relationships more with her students. So I think that
zero tolerance policy is slipping away. It used to be we're going to
suspend his child or what's the consequence for this child. But
now the conversation is shifting to more of a restorative approach
so I think that’s a huge plus. We still a few teachers that are still
stuck in that mindset. But what we're trying to communicate is
consequence can also be corrective, instructive, and restorative.

Critical Friend: Do you think that teachers building those relationships are
deterring those negative behaviors?

Researcher: I believe so. When you build relationships, you understand kids
more and rather than sending them down to the office, you get
it. You understand them and you know kids are going through so
much at home and this is not their norm. I’ll provide him or her a
little bit of peace and quiet in class and be part of the class rather
than sending him down and missing instruction.

Critical Friend: Could that be part of the conversation you can have when you
share with them? I noticed that when we were doing this well,
people were building relationships and getting to know kids better
and how building relationships can have an impact by decrease in
behavior.

Researcher: I think that’s a great idea. We are scheduled to meet as a school this week. So I think you’re right in just even celebrating the successes and just reflecting on that. Also just having staff share their challenges. I will be very supportive of them and what their needs are.

Critical Friend: What do you notice changes with the kids?

Researcher: With the kids, when I or teachers ask them during a restorative conversation what’s wrong or if they were ever sent to the office, they immediately know what they did wrong and refer to the 3Bs. That language is constantly used in the classroom. I also noticed that in the restorative component, kids are more open and you can relate to them whereas before it was more asking what did you do and then here's your consequences. Now we embrace and get deeper into the conversations and students are able to share more about themselves and I think again it goes back to building that relational trust with them and getting to know them and where they are coming from.

Critical Friend: As a school leader, what have you noticed about you and building relationships with your kids and staff? What changes are you noticing about yourself when it comes to discipline and positive behavior?

Researcher: I've deterred from consistently referring to misconduct reports because of compliancy. I noticed that I force myself to be more visible in school. I think I've always been but now more often with the kids in general but also kids that need it and checking in with them more, learning about them. I also know that I don't have all the answers that I do struggle with this process and that you know it takes a team and to do that it takes us meeting together and collaborate on ideas. And now that I'm thinking about it, that does not happen often as I think I think I need to. I need to do that.

Critical Friend: Being one person how do you manage? It’s a lot in addition to the other things that you have to do and dealing with discipline can take the entire day. So how do you manage?

Researcher: How do I manage? I feel that my office is now more on the hallways. I’ll take my laptop with me. I know where the classrooms are that needed extra support. We have some new or
veteran teachers that require that support and do not have that relationship with kids as I do so that can be a challenge as well so I know where those areas are based on just the referrals that I receive. I know particular recess groups where there's issues so I make myself available or be present there because I think also people don't know how to really deal with it.


Researcher: So throughout this study, I'm supposed be focusing on the schoolwide implementation of the 3Bs, PBIS, but with that I'm supposed be using the seven habits framework. So as I reflect on this and where I am so far I am using those habits. I'm being proactive knowing where the behavior issues are and being there. Putting first things first sometimes when behavior warrants or when a kids needs social emotional support, you need to drop everything and take of that because that’s more important.

I don't have a solution to everything so I have to collaborate and think win-win with my staff. Rather than being punitive, I seek to understand first before making decisions. So I think that is critical to what I'm doing right now and I think I would like to utilize more of that in this next phase and helping people understand. There some pushback with the 7 habits to be honest with you because people don’t think it’s the social emotional piece they need in school or they don’t believe in it. People feel they need a system or a script to teach behaviors where the seven habits, it's built into what we already do. I do see people exhibiting and doing but they don’t realize that they are actually using the 7 habits. So I think I really need to point that out, “look you’re being proactive here” and using the 7 habits as I implement the positive behaviors.
APPENDIX E

TRANSCRIPT OF CRITICAL FRIEND INTERVIEW 2
Critical Friend Interview 2  
Transcribed by Voice Recorder  
January 22, 2019

Critical Friend: Describe your success in the implementation process.

Researcher: In the implementation process, one huge success thus far has been in the reduction of office referrals so last year we were at about 100 referrals and this year we are at 67. So we’ve reduced referrals at nearly half which is a huge win for all of us. We have also seen a slight increase in our on-track data which we monitor every five weeks and we know it’s just a slight increase but we feel that these small wins are success for our school.

Critical Friend: Is your on-track coming from grades attendance or both?

Researcher: On-track is measured by grades and attendance so both.

Critical Friend: What were or are your challenges and root causes?

Researcher: So since we last spoke, we talked about revisiting our school-wide process specifically in classroom vs. office managed behaviors. We also talked about revisiting our implementation process and re-teaching and strengthening our tier 1 SEL by providing supports for our teachers through PD. A big win again is reduction of office referrals and maximizing instructional time. Teachers have been doing a lot of that work and I’m really proud of that. Challenges I or we notice is that there’s still these chronic behaviors. The tier 2 and tier 3 behaviors are still happening. Students with chronic behaviors are being sent down to the office because teachers have exhausted all of those practices. Now the challenge is how do we support those tier 2 and 3 students. Our focus now is revisiting our tier 2 and 3 process, reviewing our strategies, and additional supports for our school so that students continue to be successful in school. Our BHT can only provide so much and these students need more than what we can offer.

Critical Friend: What shifts are you going to make in the next phase of the implementation process?

Researcher: Reflecting back to what I said was a challenge with the chronic behaviors with tiers 2 and 3 behaviors, we’re being proactive and looking at the implementation process of the positive behavior system and were utilizing the tool for implementing tier 2 and
three with the fidelity. We are reviewing what those practices look like, the systems and structures, evaluation tool to ensure that we are utilizing them effectively. We’re also seeking to understand by looking at the data for tier 2 and 3 students, where they are occurring and making sure that we also have resources to support our teachers and most of all our students. We are working on expanding our resources to community partnerships whom are able to come and help us. Another shift is reflecting on our end of year survey last year and reviewing the data. Beginning with the end in mind, we are looking at what we have accomplished from our goals and action plan, and determining what our next steps are. Our shift has also been using data to problem solve and make decisions. By monitoring our office referrals during our BHT or SEL meeting we are able to infer what supports we need. Finally, we have to make sure we are embedding literature and professional text and professional training on strategies to ensure our staff has the tools. So utilizing sharpening the saw by reading and reflecting. We talk a lot about equity in our meetings and when we tackle behaviors. So providing my staff with a variety of tools only gives them the opportunity to learn and grow as we tackle this journey together and greatly impacts what we want to do.

Critical Friend: You mentioned your staff. What changes have you noticed in their behaviors since the implementation started?

Researcher: I believe the last time we talked we were discussing how teachers were still sending students to the office without following the 3 re-teaching opportunities protocol. Yes, we were making some progress but that was still happening heavily. The shifts I have seen now is that we have done a lot of work with strengthening our Tier 1 and ensuring resources and supports are in place through training, workshops, and professional development. I see teachers approaching discipline in a more positive way. It does not have a punitive or zero tolerance mindset but rather a restorative approach. They really want to work with their kids, with each other. One teacher volunteered to approach her prior class teacher as she heard she was struggling with some behaviors. Through collaboration, current teacher was able to try recommended strategies which helped her in difficult times. So it’s not just I’m only going to work with my grade level partner but with others as well. The teachers are working together and it seems we are focused as a school on how we can make this better for all.
Critical Friend: Tell me about your students. What changes do you notice about them and their family?

Researcher: With students, I don’t think they change necessarily but it’s how we approach situations that help students change how they respond. It’s the seek to understand approach that is critical when we solve problems occurs. In utilizing the restorative approach, students are getting really good at being able to have a conversation with what happened and not just shutting down because they did something wrong and refuse to talk about it. Students are able to share with honesty whether with administration and with their family. But being able to express themselves and the mistakes they made, I think is a big step in holding ourselves accountable for what we did, apologize, and move forward in a positive way. It does not take time and in the end students are not wasting time sitting in the office but rather back in the classroom ready to continue their day.

: As for families, in modeling the restorative approach, we are able to have an open and honest conversation with families to address any behavior. I didn’t quite look forward to meeting with families when we had behavior concerns in the past. But now however, I do look forward to meeting with families and approach the meeting through the lens of synergy where we are able to have honest conversations and problem solve. In turn, families are able to have similar conversations with me and their child. I believe approaching through this lens is a win-win for all of us and has become a powerful tool in engaging our families.

Critical Friend: Tell me about you was a school leader in the research study and the changes you’ve noticed about yourself.

Researcher: At our last conversation, honestly I was a bit frustrated as I reflected on our conversation. I felt I was riding this roller coaster—we’re doing well now we’re not doing well. I felt that things were heading in the right direction but it really wasn’t. I thought we can manage through the systems and structures that we established. Then right after the school year ended, I received our 5Essentials data and I was devastated and even more frustrated when I reviewed our data. I had to really pull myself together, sharpen my saw, rethink my leadership skills. I reflected a lot on me and what I was doing through my written journal, surveys from community, and tons of school related data. What I realized was I didn’t walk the talk. I speak about the 7 habits but I wasn't always
using the 7 habits. I was often reactive rather than proactive. I did begin with the end in mind always but I did a lot of work independently rather than interdependently with others. I too needed training, workshops, and professional development in this leadership experience. I have been better I must say. I live by the 7 habits in the implementation of PBIS school-wide. I realized that while I didn’t always use the 7 habits at the initial implementation, it is absolutely critical to my work as a school leader. I needed to change that. I accepted my failures and sought renewal. That was tough on me personally but I needed that to be better and stronger at what I do. I embrace collaboration, thinking, listening, problems, problem solving, and finding solutions. I value the implementation of a school-wide positive behavior system and the use of the habits in the process and it has absolutely made a difference.

**Critical Friend:** Tell me about you personally. What changes have you noticed personally?

**Researcher:** This research study has been focused on the 7 habits and implementation of PBIS. What I have found is that the 7 habits have helped me grow not only professionally as a school leader, but also personally in my daily life experiences. When a car cuts me off, I am not reactive. When my daughters argue with each other or with me or my husband, we listen to understand one another and eventually have a win-win. When I am so stressed out, I stop what I am doing and sharpen my saw. Because I live by these habits, I feel confident in myself and with others. I embrace every problem as an opportunity to grow, learn, and lead. My hope is to share my experiences with those around me so that they too are empowered to lead successful lives.
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VITA

Marilou Rebolledo was raised in the island of Guam and moved to Chicago where she earned her Bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Marilou wanted to further her learning in education and received her Master’s Degree in Educational Administration from Governor’s State University and also became a National Board Certified Teacher. From these experiences, she found her strengths as a teacher leader developing a strong, rigorous program for early learners, participating in various school committees, and school-wide workshops. In 2010, Marilou suddenly lost her teaching partner, Chris Jensik. It was through this loss that Marilou found her strengths in leadership roles in school. She coordinated events that supported the academic and social emotional success of all students and increased family engagement. Marilou transitioned into a school-wide role and became the Assistant Principal. Being in these different capacities was a catalyst to go further in her career. She then became a Cahn Ally for the Columbia University New York Fellowship and an Emerging Leader through the New Leaders Chicago program. Marilou’s passion for school leadership inspired her to seek her Doctorate of Education in Administration and Supervision at Loyola University. Marilou is currently the principal of a school where her career began almost 24 years ago. Marilou lives in Chicago with her husband and two daughters.
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The Dissertation submitted by Marilou Rebolledo has been read and approved by the following committee members:

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