

Enhancing Effective Classroom Management in Schools: Structures for Changing Teacher Behavior

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Barbara S. Mitchell¹, Regina G. Hirn², and Timothy J. Lewis¹

Abstract

Effective classroom instructional and behavior management is essential to ensure student academic and social success. Foundational strategies such as clear expectations and routines, specific feedback, and high rates of opportunities to respond have strong empirical support, yet are often missing from educator repertoires. In this article, the authors provide a brief rationale for the inclusion of evidence-based practices accompanied with recommended resources to identify current and future practices. In addition, they also provide an overview of effective in-service educator professional development, to ensure evidence-based practices are implemented with fidelity, and recommended systemic strategies that schools and school districts can adopt to support teacher learning. Implications for teacher preparation programs also are discussed.

Keywords

evidence-based behavior management, in-service professional development, data-based decision making teams, multitiered systems of support, pre-service teacher preparation

Educators are in an era of unprecedented accountability for increasing the academic achievement of all students especially sub-groups of children who are considered at-risk for poor school outcomes (e.g., English language learners, ethnic minority, recipients of free or reduced lunch, students with disabilities). Although academic achievement indicators, such as improved proficiency scores and increased graduation rates, often are at the forefront of public attention, educators are keenly aware of the relationship between academic and social behavioral success. That is, students who consistently demonstrate appropriate social skills in school are better positioned to benefit from academic instruction. Alternately, children with persistent or chronic challenging behavior are at greater risk for exclusionary discipline practices that interrupt their education leading to a pattern of falling both academically and socially, further and

further behind. Although the symbiotic nature of social behavioral success and academic success has been documented (e.g., Reid, Gonzalez, Nordness, Trout, & Epstein, 2004), the unfortunate reality is that the majority of educators receive very limited to no training in behavior and classroom management but are expected to meet the social/emotional needs of students who present daily challenges in the classroom (Begeny & Martens, 2006).

Given the limited preparation and training most educators receive on effective classroom management to meet the needs of diverse learners, there is clear need for a strong system

¹University of Missouri, Columbia, USA

²University of Louisville, KY, USA

Corresponding Author:

Barbara S. Mitchell, University of Missouri System, 303
Townsend Hall, Columbia, MO 65211, USA.
Email: mitchellbs@missouri.edu

of evidence-based in-service professional development (Birman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000). The purpose of this article is to outline the essential elements of an in-service systems approach to build fluency with effective classroom and behavior management. In addition, in this article, we suggest how elements of the proposed in-service systems approach could be applied within teacher preparation programs. First, we offer a brief description of evidence-based classroom management practices and highlight the U.S. Department of Education resources. Next, we outline the research related to effective professional development leading to teacher change in practice and explore how current implementation science is influencing our understanding of effective professional development. Third, we provide both a research example and a real-world implementation scenario that illustrate how the recommended strategies might be applied in typical school settings. Fourth, we highlight a range of structures for enhancing practicing teachers' delivery of effective classroom management that were depicted in the research and case example scenarios. Finally, we explain how application of the information also connects with teacher training programs in higher education.

Evidence-Based Practices for Supporting Student Behavior

Over the past decade, the Institute for Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education, has evaluated behavior support and instructional strategies to determine the level of current evidence and encouraged the adoption of those with strong empirical support (see What Works Clearinghouse, <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>). In addition to individual practices, IES also has produced a series of Practice Guides that summarize related literature. Recently, the U.S. Department of Education disseminated a document summarizing evidence-based preventive and response strategies that can be applied with all students within classrooms and intensified for some students who need additional teaching and practice opportunities, specifically focusing

on social behavioral challenges (Simonsen et al., 2015). The guide includes a logic model using data-based decision making with active links to tables that describe features of the recommended practices, tools that support implementation, and implementation examples (see Table 1).

Key across the Practice Guides, and the recently released U.S. Department of Education guide, is that there are clear evidence-based strategies available to educators; often what is missing though within schools and school districts is a comprehensive system of supports to (a) train teachers, (b) provide ongoing technical assistance to problem solve implementation challenges, and (c) monitor progress to insure both implementation fidelity (i.e., adhering to key elements of the practice as it was designed or intended to be delivered) and improved student responding. Considering that a number of evidence-based classroom management practices and supporting resources are readily available, the critical missing step is determining how to best influence both pre-service and practicing teacher knowledge and insure implementation fidelity while making appropriate contextual adaptations.

Model of Teacher Change

Once teachers leave their pre-service training programs, they may experience one or more elements of an initial induction program and likely also will engage in ongoing professional development throughout the remainder of their careers. Professional development programs in education vary in content and approach but typically are focused on altering, changing, or improving an educator's knowledge, understanding, beliefs, or practices with a distal goal of improving student outcomes (Guskey, 2002). Traditional views about teacher learning often begin with efforts to change educator's perceptions or attitudes, believing that change in these will successively lead to change in practices. This notion suggests that first a teacher must be convinced a new strategy, curriculum, or instructional innovation will have a positive impact on student learning

Table 1. Evidence-Based Classroom Management Strategies.

Strategy	Description
1. Physical layout	Arrangement facilitates typical instructional activities, orderly, arranged for safe teacher and student movement.
2. Expectations	Teacher broadly describes and explicitly teaches how students should behave.
3. Routines	Teacher outlines and teaches steps for completing needed classroom procedures.
4. Behavior specific praise	Teacher delivered verbal statement that explicitly identifies and affirms a student behavior.
5. Active supervision	Teacher monitors classroom by moving, scanning, and interacting frequently with students.
6. Opportunities to respond	Teacher solicits student response with high frequency and using a variety of strategies (individual, group, written, or verbal, etc.)
7. Reminders about behavior	Before a behavior is expected, teacher makes a statement reminding students what to do.
8. Consistent responding	Teacher adheres to classroom expectations and routines and provides consistent error correction and additional instruction/re-teaching when problem behavior does occur.

before they will be willing to implement it (Guskey, 2002). Although there is evidence to suggest teacher confidence in their own abilities and their opinions about student abilities can improve fidelity of implementation (Colardarc & Breton, 1997; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Podell & Soodak, 1993; Rosenholtz, Bassler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 1986; Ware & Kitsantas, 2007), changing teacher beliefs alone is not sufficient (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

Within the past two decades, a more comprehensive approach to in-service professional development has emerged. Rather than thinking change in teaching philosophy alone drives change in practice, current research suggests changing teacher beliefs in their ability to impact student learning results from implementing practices, with support, that address a specific challenge they are facing (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012). That is, change in teacher practice is thought to influence teacher beliefs (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Specifically, when teachers see evidence of improved student outcomes resulting from a new or changed practice, then their attitudes and beliefs about the practice, and their perceptions of their ability to improve behavior,

shift (see Figure 1; Guskey, 2002). From this perspective, change in practices that are associated with improved student outcomes is a prerequisite for change in teacher beliefs and attitudes. The resulting change in beliefs and attitudes in turn may spur additional changes in practice that further improve student outcomes. This distinction is important because it can be used to shape the design and delivery of maximally effective professional learning opportunities for in-service educators and can be applied to pre-service teacher candidate preparation as well.

Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009) described a problem-solving process designed to evoke a cycle of continuous improvement through teacher professional learning opportunities. The suggested process would occur as follows. To begin, as a foundational support, schools are organized to enable teachers to meet in learning teams (grade or content oriented) on a regular basis. Learning teams commit to and maintain emphasis on shared responsibility for student engagement, learning, and success. The learning teams consistently follow a sequence of steps that include (a) examining student data to determine areas of need, (b) identifying areas where additional educator/

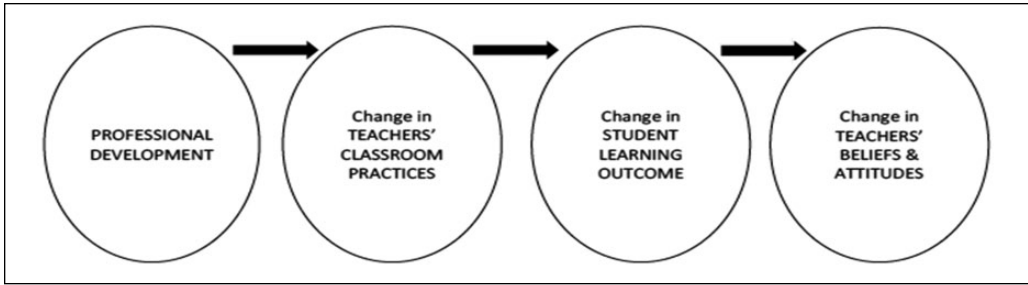


Figure 1. Guskey's logic model of teacher change (Guskey, 2002).

adult learning is needed to address student needs, (c) creating learning experiences to build educator skills, (d) developing student lessons and assessments aligned with student need incorporating the newly learned strategies, (e) applying newly learned strategies in the classroom, (f) reflecting on the impact of newly applied strategies on student learning, and (g) repeating the sequence as new challenges arise (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). In this manner, teacher learning not only is continually driven by student needs as noted through ongoing data review but also addresses contextual relevance for the educator. Specifically, professional development is explicitly aligned with needs while ongoing, data-based monitoring, for both the student and adult, also occurs. Within this process, improved student outcomes, which Guskey (2002) proposed as most influential in the teacher change process, is at the forefront of teacher learning team activities.

This cyclical approach to improvement could be applied easily to enhance in-service or pre-service teacher behavior management practices. For example, teacher learning teams use student discipline data to identify areas or skills of greatest need. Teachers select evidence-based practices that have been documented to address the challenge, and then receive professional development and ongoing technical assistance about that practice. Professional development activities are tailored to teacher preferences but may include didactic training, role-plays, or online modules. Following the targeted professional development, teachers implement the practice within their own classrooms for a designated

period of time, and subsequently reconvene in school teams to review student performance data (e.g., discipline incidents or teacher anecdotal notes about behavior). If behavioral improvements were evident, the practice that “worked” is then retained and repeated. If improvements are not noted, a series of steps as outlined above should be followed including insuring the practice was implemented with fidelity or creating adaptations that better match student need. Implementation of the effective practice, coupled with improved student outcomes, results in a change in teacher beliefs and attitudes about evidence-based classroom management strategies increasing the likelihood they will maintain the practice and be more open to the team-based problem-solving process. In the same fashion, a similar format could be devised within pre-service teacher training programs.

Implementation Science

With the understanding that change in teacher practice is likely a prerequisite for change in attitudes and beliefs that will sustain long-term commitment to use of a new skill or approach, it becomes critically important to closely examine the manner in which new learning is facilitated for both pre-service and in-service educators. Specifically, if we want teachers to acquire and use new or different instructional or management approaches, we need to attend to maximally effective learning opportunities. Traditional professional development formats are often short-term workshops, university courses that may not address the specific needs or context of the school, and/or observational

Table 2. A Summary of a Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Training and Coaching on Teachers' Implementation in the Classroom (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

Training components	Outcomes (% of participants who demonstrate knowledge, demonstrate new skills in a training setting, and use new skills in the classroom)		
	Demonstrate knowledge	Demonstrate new skill in training	Use new skills in classroom
Theory and discussion only	10	5	0
Plus demonstration in training	30	20	0
Plus practice and feedback in training	60	60	5
Plus coaching in the classroom	95	95	95

visits to other classrooms or schools (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Unfortunately, all these are predicated on the assumption that the educator will develop fluency with the new skill, generalize it back to their classroom, and maintain implementation with high fidelity over time. Often referred to as “train and hope,” the limitations of this approach are well documented (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). Instead, effective professional development is intensive, ongoing, and connected with practice; focuses on specific academic content; is aligned with other school initiatives; and builds working relationships among teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Fixsen and colleagues (2005) contended, effective training appears to consist of presenting information (knowledge), providing demonstrations (live or taped) of the practice, and assuring opportunities to rehearse key skills in the training setting with feedback.

Training

Joyce and Showers (2002) have documented the limitations of common professional development and highlight the essential element to truly improve educator practice, providing educators ongoing technical assistance and performance feedback following initial training. Their meta-analysis of research focusing on teacher training in public school settings highlights several important points that are relevant to support both pre-service and veteran educators' use of evidence-based practices. First, training that consisted of theory and dis-

cussion alone demonstrated minimal increase in teacher knowledge, very little ability to translate theory into practice, and no transfer of actual skill use to the classroom setting. Second, some gains in teacher knowledge and use of skill in the training setting were evident when demonstrations during the training were added, but still the transfer to use of skills in the classroom did not occur. Third, even when practice and feedback were embedded into training sessions, along with other components, the use of new skills in the classroom setting only occurred with approximately 5% of participants. Only when “coaching”, through technical assistance and performance feedback, was provided to classroom teachers following typical professional development did the training result in greater than chance implementation. In fact, according to Joyce and Showers (2002), multicomponent training with classroom coaching led to increased knowledge, correct demonstration of skills in the training setting, and transfer of skills to classroom settings for 95% of the participants (see Table 2).

Coaching

As indicated previously, “coaching,” providing direct technical assistance and performance feedback to educators, is essential in conjunction with effective training, to lead to improved practice (Knight, 2007). As teachers learn and begin to apply new skills, they are likely to encounter several challenges. Provision of effective coaching can serve two important

Table 3. Elements of Effective Teacher Training and Coaching.

Staff training provides	Staff coaching provides
<p><i>information</i> about theory, rationale, and practice or program components in a lecture or discussion format to advance knowledge acquisitions and understanding.</p> <p><i>demonstrations</i> (live or taped) of skills and abilities necessary for carrying out the practice or program components.</p> <p>opportunity for <i>behavior rehearsals</i> within the training setting that allow participants to try out skills and receive feedback.</p>	<p><i>supervision</i> such that performance of the new practice or program is observed in the intended setting.</p> <p><i>teaching</i> while engaged in practice or program activities in the intended setting.</p> <p><i>assessment</i> and <i>performance feedback</i> about delivery or use of the practice or program in the intended setting.</p> <p>emotional or personal support and <i>encouragement</i> for delivery of the practice or program.</p>

Source. Adapted from Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, and Wallace (2005).

functions. First, coaching ensures that educators are implementing the practice with fidelity. Second, coaching can allow the educator to adapt practices with input and feedback on outcomes (see Table 3). Newly learned behavior is at first sometimes delivered in an awkward or clumsy manner when compared with the eloquent delivery of a master teacher. Access to a coach gives teachers someone who understands the practice, can observe and describe nuances of the practice being acquired, and can help in the development of a personal style of delivery that still adheres to core principles of the evidence-based strategy (Fixsen et al., 2005; Knight, 2007). In addition, coaching also can help the educator sustain the evidence-based practice in the presence of push back or resistance from their peers or administrators who may be “philosophically” opposed to the new practice. Finally, in some cases, newly learned behavior is used incorrectly, or knowledge about the skill is incomplete. In these cases, coaching support may help teachers integrate new learning in a manner that not only is accurate but also has contextually relevant fit for the particular environment. To summarize, coaching might be best described as support coupled with pressure (Birman et al., 2000). Support allows individuals actively seeking to change their practices the encouragement and fortitude to continue despite potential anxiety or reservations, while building skill fluency. Pressure provides the nudging that may be needed to keep a new practice at the forefront of day to day activities.

Research Example

The work of Abbott and colleagues (1998) provides an example in which teachers received multicomponent and ongoing support for implementing proactive classroom management and interactive teaching strategies. In this study, we examined the effects of a sequenced training schedule and activities on teacher implementation of a specified set of strategies which included proactive classroom management, interactive teaching, and cooperative learning. In addition, we also looked at the impact of teacher use of strategies on academic skills and the school’s “commitment” to effective practices for students in Grades 5 and 6 in an urban setting (Abbott et al., 1998). The primary goal was to test the impact of an intervention on change in teacher methods of classroom instruction, but a secondary aim was to measure the impact of teacher change on student outcomes. The teacher intervention consisted of training, coaching, and regularly scheduled observations with performance feedback (i.e., once every 3 weeks). Specifically, teachers received 3 days of training, in August prior to the beginning of their school year, to address the first teaching practice, proactive classroom management. Training for the second practice, interactive teaching, was provided in October, followed by training in February to introduce the third strategy, cooperative learning (Abbott et al., 1998). The training sequence was deliberately designed such that

participating teachers had time for guided practice, independent practice, and coaching between the instructional training sessions. In addition, teachers received feedback about their use of newly learned strategies both from project staff and from their building principal on a consistent basis.

Outcomes from the study showed that average implementation scores for intervention teachers were nearly double of those teachers in the control condition. Furthermore, targeted practices were implemented with fidelity and had a positive impact on targeted student outcomes (Abbott et al., 1998). One important conclusion drawn by us was the importance of a whole-school approach for teacher training because it allowed for the development of schoolwide structures of support (Abbott et al., 1998). Examples of schoolwide support structures in this case were the use of peer coaches to enhance skill application or improvement and the inclusion of training during staff meetings which allowed opportunities for information dissemination and problem solving.

Implementation Example

Building teacher fluency to simultaneously implement evidence-based practices and problem solve student academic and behavioral challenges using the logic outlined in this article takes time, well-thought-out professional development, and a commitment to sustained implementation (Lewis, Mitchell, Bruntmyer, & Sugai, 2016). Building on the logic and essential features for providing educators with the skills, tools, and processes to address challenging behavior, recent work within schoolwide positive behavior supports (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010) has provided a vehicle to promote the use of evidence-based practices through a collaborative team process. The following scenario provides a case in point.

In response to a principal inquiry regarding strategies to increase student engagement during instruction and address classroom management issues, six teachers agreed to engage in peer observation and goal setting as a pro-

fessional development activity. This example began with observations across an entire school during instructional times. Data were collected, and the general findings provided to the entire faculty as an overview of schoolwide means of teacher and student behaviors during instruction. Teacher behaviors reported back to faculty included the percent of time engaged with students, rate of opportunities provided for student response, and rate of positive and negative feedback. Student behaviors included percent of time engaged and rate of disruption.

Following a full faculty discussion, six volunteers agreed to work with a partner to increase self-selected instructional behaviors. This professional development opportunity was designed to develop the use of effective teacher behaviors (the variables described in the observations). Teams of two teachers (professional dyads) were self-selected, allowing teachers to identify a peer with whom they were comfortable working, and whom they would welcome into their classroom for observation and sharing of data. Each dyad followed the same basic sequence on a monthly basis: observation of one another, sharing of observation data, and goal setting.

The process began with baseline classroom observation by the trainer, from which individual feedback on both teacher and student behavior was provided in a visual format (line graph). The trainer described each variable, and teachers reviewed their data. From this information, each teacher chose one effective teacher practice as their personal focus. Using the planning document presented in Figure 2, each dyad planned for the timing and location of both the observation and feedback sessions they would be sharing. The trainer then provided training in the effective teacher practice selected, demonstrating specific strategies for increasing these behaviors.

Observations were conducted using an iPad and the application Student/Classroom Observation and Analysis (Anderson, 2016). This tool allowed each teacher to customize the type of data collected, observe and collect real-time information using the device, and, immediately upon completion of the observation,

Data Collection
Planning/Goal Setting with SCOA
Teacher: _____

Step 1: Choose an area of interest. What data would you like your partner to collect?

Area of Interest	What
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Description:

Step 2: Determine a plan for collection. When and where will data be collected?

When will it be collected?	Where will it be collected?
Time	Location

Step 3: How will data be sent to the teacher?

Who will collect?	Number of observations	Send to...
Teacher :	_____ times per week	Email address of teacher:

Teacher : _____ Observed by Teacher : _____

Data to be collected (specific description):

Time: _____

Location: _____

Figure 2. Professional development planning form.
 Note. SCOA = Student/Classroom Observation and Analysis.

email the findings to their dyad partner. Teachers received training in the use of the device including practice with video examples and trainer feedback.

The trainer was available for technical support for the duration of the project. Throughout the program, teachers met in dyads and within their grade-level learning

communities to share experiences and outcomes. At the end of 6 weeks, teachers met again with the trainer to discuss and describe findings from the implementation. Teachers were encouraged to describe their experience with the activity including both their goals and outcomes and any realized impact on student behavior. After baseline, some teachers

Table 4. Teacher Goal Selection and Outcomes Following Peer Observations.

Teachers	Selected goal area	Baseline	Peer observation averages
Dyad A			
1	Positive feedback statements (rate)	0.2/minute	1.6/minute
2	Opportunity to respond	Classroom 0.72/minute	Target student 0.2/minute
Dyad B			
1	Positive:Negative feedback	0:1	3:1
2	Target student off-task during centers	5%	0%
Dyad C			
1	Positive:Negative feedback	1:0	7:0
2	Student engagement	Classroom 42% active 58% passive 0% off-task	Target student 60% active 4% passive 36% off-task

Note. Target denotes that teacher moved from a class focus to an individual student focus for observations.

looked at the data and elected to focus on individual target students. In these circumstances (Dyad A Teacher 2, Dyad C Teacher 2), baseline and peer-observation data are not consistent. In Dyad B, Teacher 2 was able to calculate an off-task rate for an individual student and use that as a true baseline for focus on this target student. Results for each dyad are presented in Table 4.

Teacher responses to follow-up surveys were unanimously positive with most indicating that the process was worthwhile. Comments included the following: “I believe it has the potential to be a great tool in helping me reflect on my teaching,” and “It calls attention to the use of positive feedback in your classroom.” Some also noted positive changes in student behavior during instruction when the focus was on a target student. As one teacher increased her use of praise directed to a particular student, she noted that student disruptions (out of seat behavior) decreased. This implementation example describes one professional development program incorporating key elements to build fluency of effective teacher practices and address behavior management in the classroom.

Structures for Supporting Teacher Change

Many professional learning programs have limited positive impact because of the failure to account for the many factors that may motivate teachers to engage in change and the process by which change occurs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, & Birman, 2002; Gonsoulin, Zablocki, & Leone, 2012; Guskey, 2002; Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010). Systems for supporting teacher use of effective management practices that are designed with these considerations in mind are more likely to achieve intended outcomes. The following sections represent minimal structures that are known to have a positive influence on teacher implementation of evidence-based practices, which can be used as stand-alone supports or provided in combination to maximize use of evidence-based management procedures.

Continuum of Evidence-Based Practices

One key support that often is unaddressed both in undergraduate teacher training programs

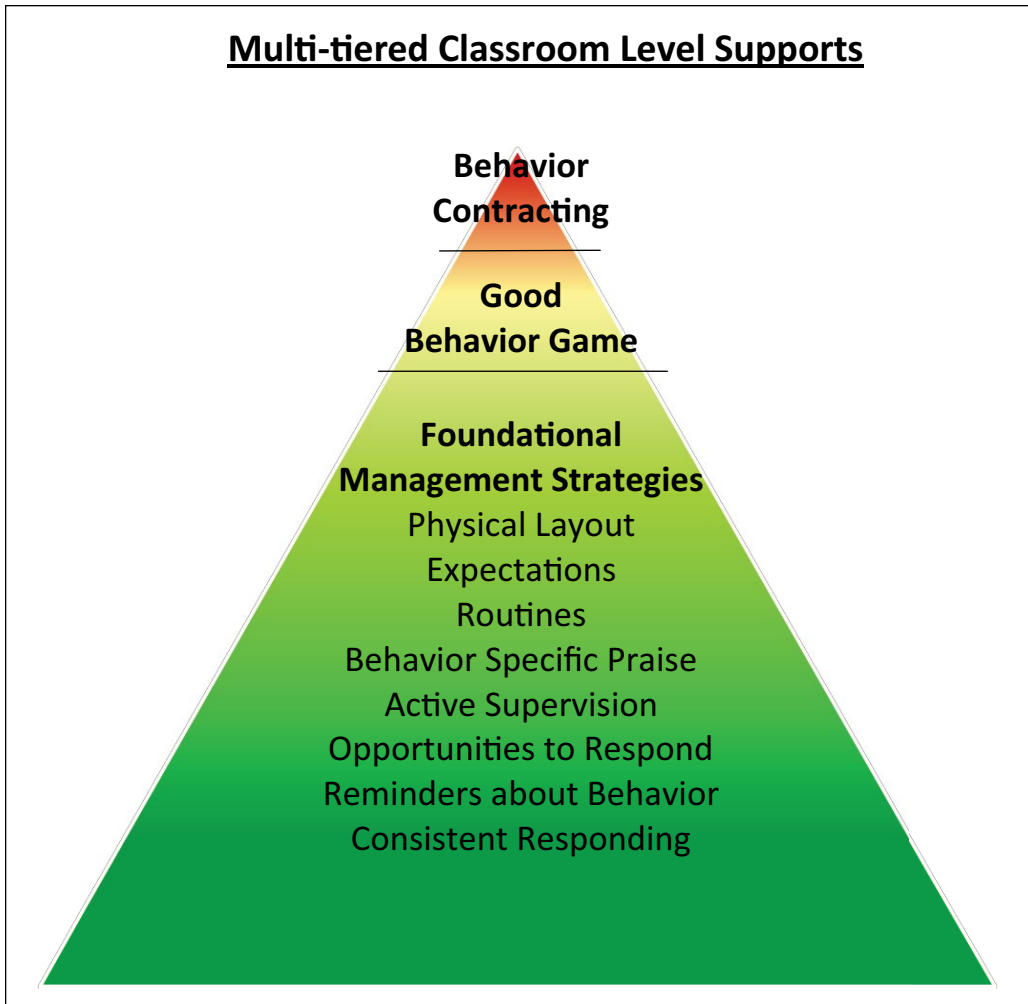


Figure 3. Continuum of classroom-level behavior management supports (Adamson, McKenna, & Mitchell, 2016).

and in school settings is clearly articulated expectations about which classroom management strategies should be in place in all classrooms. Not only should minimum expectations about management strategies that are provided for all students be explicitly outlined, but there also is need for a continuum of strategies that support students who are nonresponsive to basic management practices (Office of Special Education Programs [OSEP] Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports, 2015). The collection of identified practices should be carefully selected using standards of evidence (e.g.,

What Works Clearinghouse) and driven by student need and contextual fit (Cook & Odom, 2013; Cook, Tankersley, Cook, & Landrum, 2008). For example, Figure 3 illustrates a complete continuum which includes a range of evidence-based practices that could be applied in all classrooms (Adamson, McKenna, & Mitchell, 2016). In this example, foundational management practices such as (a) clearly identified classroom expectations and procedures, (b) precorrects and active supervision to promote student skill use, (c) behavior specific praise to acknowledge student mastery of social behavioral expectations, (d) error

corrections for minor problem behavior, and (e) the use of instructional strategies that promote high rates of student success (e.g., multiple opportunities to respond) are included. Next, the Good Behavior Game (Barrish, Saunders, & Wolf, 1969) provides an example of a second layer of more intensive support to promote desired behavior if the foundational supports alone are not leading to improved student behavior (Flower, McKenna, Bunuan, Muething, & Vega, 2014). Finally, individual student behavioral contracts, paired with social skill instruction, could be adopted to provide supports for those students who continue to struggle. Although this example depicts a prevention-oriented approach, it also includes the use of more intensive strategies that provide teachers with a range of options for meeting the social behavioral needs of all students in a classroom. The range of options included in a classroom continuum is flexible according to contextual relevance for the specified setting. Both pre-service teacher candidates and in-service educators could benefit from being presented with the idea first that there are a number of evidence-based management strategies which are effective for promoting desired student behavior, and second, that an additional range of strategies can be provided for students who need more support.

Commitment to Implementation Fidelity

Once a continuum of evidence-based practices has been selected and adopted, commitment to implementation fidelity provides another structural support that increases the likelihood of teacher and student success. Committing to fidelity of implementation ensures that procedures are in place to promote accurate adoption of selected practices (McKenna, Flower, & Ciullo, 2014). When structures and systems are in place to ensure selected practices are delivered with high fidelity, and when regular assessment of implementation and monitoring of student responsiveness occurs, students experience maximum benefit (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports, 2015). Processes

that may facilitate implementation fidelity include (a) clearly articulated definitions and steps for delivery of practices with effective dissemination among all who will use, (b) regular and ongoing monitoring of use of the practices, and (c) periodic performance feedback (see, for additional strategies, <http://pbissmissouri.org/educators/effective-class-practice>). Each of these processes can be incorporated in teacher preparation programs, new teacher induction programs, and in-service professional learning opportunities. For example the Teacher Self-Assessment of the Effective Classroom Practices (<http://pbissmissouri.org/educators/effective-class-practice>) lists evidence-based management practices, outlines key features of the practice, and allows opportunity for teachers to consider and assess their use of the practice, and then codifies these strategies into classroom management plans to guide and assist. Having available a document that explicitly identifies the practices to be implemented and the procedures for delivering them effectively, along with the expectation of monitoring student outcomes, gives educators a way to engage in conversations about implementation fidelity. When attention is given to the topic, the likelihood for delivery with fidelity improves (McKenna et al., 2014). A second helpful resource is the Classroom Walk Through Observation tool (<http://pbissmissouri.org/educators/effective-class-practice>). The tool can be used by school administrators, a same grade-level colleague, a district behavior specialist, or within teacher preparation programs to assess the degree to which the classroom teacher or pre-service candidate is implementing his or her rules, procedures, routines, as well as engaging in high rates of effective practices (e.g., opportunities to respond, positive feedback). Strategies for delivery of feedback may differ for pre-service candidates in teacher training programs versus new or experienced teachers who are already in the field. Each entity can determine its own contextually appropriate strategies for giving feedback; the important factor is that performance feedback is given and expected as part of the professional learning cycle.

Teaming Approach

To this point, it should be clear that a single classroom teacher or pre-service teacher candidate would be hard pressed to locate evidence-based practices, seek out professional development opportunities which include performance feedback, and continually progress monitor their own implementation fidelity. Working collectively within a school or teacher training program, however, will greatly enhance the implementation of all the essential components outlined to this point (i.e., continuum of evidence-based practices, commitment to implementation fidelity, and data-driven decision making). In school settings, teams (e.g., department or grade level) provide the structure for developing a shared vision and beliefs about students and their abilities to learn (DuFour, 2004). Teaming is an avenue for supportive conditions, such as time, place, resources, and working relationships that facilitate collective learning, to address student needs (Hord, 2009). When given the structure of having a group with a common interest and goal, such as improved student learning, members can engage in reflective dialogue about curriculum, instruction, and student development, and colleagues can share their practices to gain feedback, which, in turn, leads to individual and organizational improvement (Hord, 2009; Vescio, Ross, & Adams, 2008). More specifically, use of a team-based approach also allows members to work together, using data, to identify how students are currently performing, establish common learning goals, work together toward student improvement, and engage in regular monitoring and review of outcome data (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; DuFour, 2004). Teacher teaming is particularly relevant in the case of enhancing behavior management practices as this is a topic that teachers frequently find most challenging, and for which, they are least prepared (Freeman, Simonsen, Briere, & MacSuga-Gage, 2014).

Teams can be organized within a grade level, across grade levels, or according to content expertise. Regardless of how the group members are organized, use of a team approach provides a deliberate mechanism for guiding, coordinating, administering, and monitoring

selected management practices within the setting. To accurately use and sustain an evidence-based practice, there is need for on-site personnel who are fluent in its use; a team approach to behavior management facilitates development of local capacity for ongoing implementation (OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports, 2015). The following link provides an example of educators implementing a team-based problem-solving strategy (<http://www.vimeo.com/54954199>; Lewis & Mitchell, 2015). Key to developing both the process the team follows and the skill sets of the teachers was sustained ongoing professional development. The team chair committed to several training sessions, independent readings, multiple “role-play” practice opportunities, and performance feedback on her adherence to the problem-solving process. The team members committed to a series of brief trainings and practice with coaches present to both give feedback on reaching solutions for students and on their adherence to the steps in the process (e.g., review and prepare relevant data prior to the meeting, stay on task, ask clarifying questions, etc.). The video demonstrates that teams, with effective professional development and ongoing supports, can work effectively together to match evidence-based practices to individual student need that “fits” within their current classroom structures.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to outline the essential elements of an in-service system approach to build fluency with effective classroom and behavior management. We included recommendations on locating evidence-based classroom management practices, outlined the research related to effective professional development, and explored how current implementation science has influenced understanding of effective professional development. We provided both a research study and an implementation case example illustrating how the recommended structures might be applied in a typical school setting. We also defined a range of structures for enhancing pre-service and practicing teachers’ delivery of effective classroom

management which included clear expectations about a continuum of behavior management practices identified for use in every classroom, a commitment to and supports for ensuring implementation fidelity, and the use of teacher teams as a mechanism for acquiring and sustaining evidence-based management practices. Finally, a variety of resources and links for additional materials were embedded to show the types of tools that might be useful to incorporate in pre- or in-service teacher learning opportunities.

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Author Biographies

Barbara S. Mitchell, PhD, is an assistant research professor for the University of Missouri. Her work focuses on Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (E/BD), School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SW-PBS), and classroom management.

Regina G. Hirn, PhD, is an assistant professor at the University of Louisville, Department of Special Education. Her research interests include strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior disorders and implementation of effective teacher practices in the classroom.

Timothy J. Lewis, PhD, is a professor of special education at the University of Missouri. His research interests focus on positive behavior supports.