

Copyright

by

Nicole Ann Whetstone

2015

**The Dissertation Committee for Nicole Ann Whetstone Certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:**

**Culturally Responsive Check-in/Check-out:  
Implementation of a Tier 2 SWPBS Intervention**

**Committee:**

---

**Mark O'Reilly, Supervisor**

---

**Mark Gooden**

---

**Terry Falcomata**

---

**Andrea Flower**

---

**Audrey Sorrells**

**Culturally Responsive Check-in/Check-out:  
Implementation of a Tier 2 SWPBS Intervention**

**by**

**Nicole Ann Whetstone, B.A; M.S.Ed.**

**Dissertation**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
The University of Texas at Austin  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**May 2015**

## **Dedication**

This is dedicated to my son Malcolm Anthony Whetstone.

## **Acknowledgements**

First of all I would like to thank God for giving me the strength to make it through this process. Secondly, I am very appreciative of my family for all their support and patience while I have been in school, my parents, Clarence and Ann Whetstone, my sister Joi and nephew Brandon. Thank you for your encouragement throughout this journey and my career, I will be forever grateful.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Mark O'Reilly foremost for giving me a second chance and encouraging me every time we met. I am also grateful to the rest of my dissertation committee members, Dr. Sorrells, Dr. Falcomata, Dr. Gooden and Dr. Flower. A special thank you to Dr. Sorrells, who has always been so inspirational to me through her work.

I am especially grateful to two of my closest friends, Dr. Shanae Riley and Gloria Waegerle who never gave up on me and rooted for me throughout this entire process. Last but certainly not least I cannot forget my research and writing BFF and one of the best teachers I have ever met, Veronica Ruiz who has supported me through this journey.

# **Culturally Responsive Check-in/Check-out: Implementation of a Tier 2 SWPBS Intervention**

Nicole Ann Whetstone, Ph.D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2015

Supervisor: Mark O'Reilly

There is a plethora of data reporting the imbalance of office referrals and suspensions for culturally diverse students (Vincent & Tobin, 2011; Skiba, Michael, Nardo & Peterson, 2002; Skiba, Peterson, Williams, 1997). Specifically, African American students are frequently referred for behaviors such as noncompliance and disrespect at much higher rates than their White counterparts. Without addressing these disproportionate discipline practices, the achievement gap in many schools will continue to persist.

Given the significance of addressing inconsistent discipline practices, School Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS) has the potential to significantly address this phenomenon (Vincent, Randall, Cartledge, Tobin & Swain-Bradway, 2011). SWPBS involves a continuum of support to prevent inappropriate student behavior and increase student achievement. Numerous studies support the use of evidenced based behavioral interventions within a SWPBS system as a means to reducing challenging behavior for students. One such intervention is the *Behavior Education Program* which incorporates a Check-in/Check-out procedure (Hawken, O'Neil & MacLeod, 2011; Hawken, 2006).

Check-in/Check-out has been noted in the literature as an effective intervention resulting in a decrease of office referrals in several studies (Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino & Lathrop, 2007). Likewise, there are a number of qualitative studies that identify culturally responsive strategies when working with African American students (Milner, 2011; Bondy, Ross, Galligane and Hambacher, 2007). One strategy involves the use of a culturally responsive discourse style. The purpose of this study was to increase the effectiveness of the Check-in/Check-out intervention by incorporating the use of the culturally responsive discourse style for African American males at the middle level. A nonconcurrent multiple baseline design was used to identify the relationship between the intervention and student behaviors. Results showed a positive impact for student participants as measured by an increase in points on a daily monitoring form and an overall decline in office discipline referrals.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures.....	x
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM .....	1
School Wide Positive Behavior Support.....	5
SWPBS and CR Framework .....	7
Research questions.....	10
<b>CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE .....</b>	<b>11</b>
INTRODUCTION .....	11
SWPBS definition and explanation .....	11
Research on SWPBS outcomes .....	13
SWPBS at elementary schools.....	15
SWPBS at secondary schools .....	17
Tier 2 Interventions.....	20
Check-in/Check-out Outcomes for African American Students	29
Culturally Responsive Discourse Style.....	36
<b>CHAPTER 3: METHOD.....</b>	<b>44</b>
Introduction.....	44
Setting .....	44
Student Participants .....	46
Student Selection Process .....	48
Teacher Participants.....	49
Dependent Variables.....	50
52	
Independent Variable: Culturally Responsive Check-in/Check-out....	52
Experimental Design.....	53
Baseline.....	54
Intervention .....	55



Data Collection .....	55
<b>CHAPTER 4: RESULTS.....</b>	<b>57</b>
Student participant results.....	57
Teacher participant results .....	68
<b>CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>70</b>
Implications.....	71
Implications for practice .....	71
Implication for Research.....	76
Future research.....	80
Limitations .....	87
Summary .....	89
<b>APPENDIX A: FACTS .....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>APPENDIX B: CHECK IN CHECK OUT POINT SHEET .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>VITA.....</b>	<b>107</b>

## **List of Tables and Figures**

Table 1. Review of Studies on Check-in/Check-out.....	33
Table 2. Demographic Information.....	45
Table 3. Student Participant Characteristics .....	48
Table 4. Teacher Participants.....	50
Table 5. Student participant target behaviors .....	51
Figure 1: Michael Percentage of points earned.....	58
Figure 2: Michael ODRs.....	59
Figure 3: James Percentage of points earned .....	60
Figure 4: James ODRs .....	61
Figure 5: Charles percentage of points earned.....	62
Figure 6: Charles ODRs.....	63
Figure 7: George percent of point earned .....	64
Figure 8: George ODRs .....	65
Figure 9: Tony percentage of points earned .....	66
Figure 10: Tony ODRs.....	67
Table 6. Teacher Participant Social Validity Results .....	69

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

At this time in our society, schools are challenged more than ever with providing a safe school environment while educating a diverse school population. School administrators, policy makers and educational researchers continue to search for ways to implement effective school discipline without the continuous removal of students from the classroom. There is an abundance of data reporting the inequality of office referrals and suspensions for culturally diverse students (Vincent & Tobin, 2011; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Skiba, Peterson, Williams, 1997). In a statewide report on discipline practices in Texas (Council of State Governments, 2011) the researchers reported that African-American male students had at least one discretionary violation (83%), compared to (74%) for Hispanic male students, and (59%) for white male students. Using multivariate analyses, the researchers were able to extrapolate that even when controlling for multiple variables, a white student from a low socioeconomic background with frequent absenteeism was less likely to be disciplined as an African American student with similar attributes when displaying similar behaviors. More detailed analysis revealed that over 90% of all students with a disciplinary act (94.2% of African Americans, 92.7% of Hispanics, and 93.3% of whites) were first disciplined for behaviors that are not subject to mandatory removal under state law. A higher percentage of African-American (26.2%) and Hispanic (18%) students were placed in out-of-school suspensions for their first violation than were whites (9.9%). Similarly, the percentage of white students (86.5%) had as their first disposition an in-school suspension compared to

African-American (71.5%) and Hispanic (79.1%) students (Council of State Governments, 2011). Skiba and colleagues (2002) found that African American middle school students, as compared with white middle school students, were more likely to be issued referrals for subjective reasons, such as defiance and disrespect. Also in a middle school sample, Wentzel (2002) found that teachers perceived African American students as more defiant, disrespectful, and rule-breaking than other groups and this resulted in overall contrasting discipline referrals.

Discipline referrals issued from the classroom reflect social processes between teachers and students (Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Teachers interpret student's behavior and react based on their personal beliefs and perceptions. For students, discipline practices are most often not the same throughout the school day. Research has consistently shown that culturally and linguistically diverse students are at risk for having their actions misconstrued by teachers and administrators (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008). Teacher behavior and response varies regarding what they perceive as cooperative or defiant behavior with the same students. In a study of African American students who received discipline referrals for defiance, Gregory and Weinstein (2008) found that teachers perceive African American students as more defiant than other teachers with whom students had self-reported as getting along with. This same study also revealed that what teachers and administrators consider defiance varies and therefore their reactions to various types of students changes. Negative stereotypes combined with the idea that culturally diverse students are inherently academically deficient leads to the conclusion that racial minorities, particularly African American students are not interested in education (Good & Nichols, 2001). With this mindset, teachers may respond more

punitively to the conduct of African American students than toward identical behavior by white students.

Researchers (Boykin, 1983 as cited in Webb-Johnson, 2003; Green, 2005; Banks, et. al, 2001) have acknowledged that when African American students conduct themselves in ways that are affirmed by their culture those behaviors are often misinterpreted by their teachers and seen as inappropriate. This adversely affects the student-teacher relationship and may exacerbate any academic challenges. Multicultural perspectives determine that social behaviors are influenced by culture and social interactions are connected (Ogbu, 1990). Individuals interact with society and become aware of different ways of behaving and varied expectations. Results from empirical studies indicate that students from culturally diverse backgrounds engage in distinctive language patterns, styles of dress, and forms of nonverbal communication (Howard, 2001; Monroe & Obidah, 2004; Kern, 2009). African American student behaviors and orientations are often incongruent with European-influenced school norms (Neal, McCray, Webb-Johnson & Bridges, 2003; Townsend, 2000). Webb-Johnson (2003) asserts that when some African American behavior patterns are perceived as consistently problematic, teachers spend more time attending to the “inappropriate behavior” than to the instruction of that student and academic failure becomes imminent. If academic success is going to increase for culturally diverse students with perceived challenging behaviors, particularly for African American students, teachers must be knowledgeable about the social and cultural contexts of behavior, teaching and learning. Banks and colleagues (2001) determined that teachers should use multiple culturally sensitive techniques to assess complex cognitive and social skills. For example, Ford and Kea

(2009) cite using techniques such as opportunities for tactile activities, social activities during lessons and experiential learning as strategies that are conducive for African American students learning style.

Given that the majority of public teachers in the United States are White and that schools are becoming more racially diverse, the importance of understanding cultural differences is vital (Duda & Utley, 2005; Krezmien, Leone, & Achilles, 2006). Cultural diversity must not be overlooked in the behavioral assessment of students because the social context of learning and the attitudes, values, and behaviors of the family, peer group, and community profoundly influence students' behavior (Weinstein, Curran & Tomilson-Clarke, 2003). Before judging behaviors as inappropriate educators must acknowledge culture and social environment as critical factors when developing effective educational practices. Ladson-Billings (1995) elaborated that behavior standards are cultural judgments and cannot be culture-free. Cartledge, Lee, & Feng (1995) also contend that educators must have the ability to interpret the behaviors of learners from culturally diverse backgrounds, distinguish social behaviors from deficits, and use effective instructional strategies to assist learners in increasing their academic success. This belief requires educators to develop effective management techniques to understand the influence of culture on behavior.

Once teachers recognize that developing their cultural awareness is important in working with culturally diverse students, reflecting on their teacher-student interactions and their role in the student-teacher relationships is paramount. Teachers can influence students' social and academic capabilities by their capacity to maintain interactions that inspire students' motivation. Research based on social-cultural theory has indicated that

relationships between students and teachers reflect the culture of the school and opportunities students and teachers have to develop relationships, and their abilities to make connections influence social and academic outcomes (Davis, 2003). A salient theme throughout the literature on student-teacher relationships is the notion of a culturally responsive discourse style. Terms may vary, however, qualitative researchers have consistently described how effective teachers of culturally diverse students engage in discourse with their students that uses familiar communication patterns, cultural humor and clear behavioral expectations (Bondy, Ross, Galligane and Hambacher, 2007; Brown, 2004; Ozer, Wolf, & Kong, 2008; Ware, 2006;). These interactions create positive environments where students are academically successful and have little discipline issues. Recent research by McHugh, Horner, Colditz and Wallace (2013) used the term “effortful engagement” to describe adolescent perceptions on how teachers should relate towards students. This included inquiring about their needs and making efforts to nurture beneficial relationships.

### ***School Wide Positive Behavior Support***

As a means to addressing an overall increase in school violence and discipline issues, school wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) is a set of intervention practices and organizational system for identifying the social culture of a school. Within the SWPBS framework includes intensive individual behavior supports needed to gain social success for all students (Sugai, Horner, & Lewis, 2009). SWPBS does not include a prescribed curriculum, but a process of establishing preventative behavioral guidelines

and building school capacity. Schools adopt the use of data for decision making, consistent professional development to create a safe school environment (Sugai & Horner, 2006). SWPBS typically consists of three tiers (Sugai, et. al, 2000). All students receive basic preventive support which includes guidelines for behavior in common areas and general classroom behavior expectations. Tiers within SWPBS are primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention is implemented across the entire school, for all students, in all settings. One of the basic intervention features is clear behavior expectations that are taught using direct instruction (Sugai, et. al, 2000). Students receive regular feedback for following school-wide and general classroom expectations. Data about problem behaviors are collected and used for decision making by school teams. Secondary level supports are designed for students who are not responding to the first level of behavior expectations. Students who require secondary supports continue to participate in school wide activities; however they are receiving additional supports to increase their success of school wide behavior expectations. Secondary interventions are strategies that are implemented to address students who are displaying behavior challenges. One evidenced-based intervention is the Check-in/Check-out system (also titled the Behavior Education Program [BEP] (March & Horner, 2002; Warberg, George, Brown, Churan, & Taylor-Greene, 1995). Using a daily progress report, the student receives immediate feedback on their behavior. In a study of secondary intervention efforts, March and Horner (2002) results show the effectiveness of the Check-in/Check-out intervention to reduce problem behavior. A central portion of the Check-in/Check-out procedure involves the teacher providing feedback on socially appropriate behaviors that are a part of the articulated behavior



expectations and social norms of the school environment (Filter, McKenna, Benedict, Horner, Todd & Watson, 2007). Although there has been sufficient research showing the effectiveness of the Check-in/Check-out procedure, there is little evidence to link the role of culturally responsive teaching plays in increasing the effectiveness of this specific secondary intervention for African American children.

### ***SWPBS and CR Framework***

Considering the current layout of public schools at this time the data is clear on the following: 1) there is an increase of culturally diverse students in the public school system and 2) there are disparate discipline practices for culturally diverse students, in particular African American students. In an effort to increase school safety and create positive school climate, SWPBS has become a worthwhile practice for establishing effective school discipline (Fallon, O’Keeffe & Sugai, 2012; Sugai & Horner, 2009). Educational researchers in this area have postulated that SWPBS has the framework most able to address disproportionate discipline practices because the method encourages the use of context and preventative supports as a means to increase appropriate behavior (Fallon, O’Keeffe & Sugai, 2012) The basics of the leveled system of support includes teaching suitable behaviors based on school based data and focuses on the role of positive reinforcement.

Grant and Ladson-Billings (1997) conceptually defined culturally responsive teaching using several different frameworks and approaches which have a direct implication for the SWPBS model which includes respectful, supportive teacher relationships integrated in multicultural education principles and approaches. Likewise, Gay (1994) noted that cultural background and ethnic identity are critical elements of

attitudes, values and behaviors including teaching and learning. Consequently, developing acceptable, school wide behavior expectations with families, students, teachers, and administrators is a part of SWPBS and the consideration of interventions for students not making academic progress. Through frequent and continuous review of information about student behavior, school personnel can develop a SWPBS program which fosters culturally responsiveness. A comprehensive and positive SWPBS that is determined by problem type and intensity of behavior has been developed, validated, and implemented in classroom environments (Sugai & Horner, 1999). In a culturally responsive framework, factors such as culture, socioeconomic status, language diversity, peers, family, school demographics, and community play a critical role in defining problem type, intensity of behavior support, and implementation of interventions (Sugai, O’Keeffe & Fallon, 2012).

Vincent and colleagues (2011) highlight one districts attempt to incorporate SWPBS with culturally responsive practices. From systematic data review which showed Latino students were disproportionately disciplined to the implementation of school wide professional development on building racial awareness, the district attempted to combat their disparate discipline practices. Results showed that although there were modest decreases in Latino students overrepresentation in expulsions there was also an increase in academic progress (Vincent, Randall, Cartledge, Tobin & Swain-Bradway, 2011). Results reported were slow and steady with encouraging outcomes. However missing from this report was the use and/or development of specific culturally responsive interventions for students not responding to level one preventative strategies.

Fallon and colleagues (2012) conducted a descriptive review of SWPBS that highlighted culture. Specifically, their goal was to identify how culture was defined and what strategies were documented in the research (Fallon, O’Keeffe & Sugai, 2012, p.210). Results of their review revealed that it was commonly suggested that intervention supports be improved. Strategies that specifically need to be strengthened include the following: clearly articulating behavioral expectations, positive reinforcement, explicitly teaching social skills, involving family and community in teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors (Fallon, O’Keeffe & Sugai, 2012, p.214). However, the authors note that because of the limited number of studies that focused on culturally diverse students the scope of the review is limited. Furthermore, the researchers recommend that more research be conducted with diverse learners in order to identify specific effective practices. Vincent and Tobin (2011) similarly expressed that although SWPBS has the potential to ameliorate disproportionate discipline practices, results from their study show modest results for culturally diverse students. The researchers articulated the following, “these sobering outcomes suggest that SWPBS implementation might have little effect on the pervasive disproportionate exclusion of African American students” (Vincent & Tobin, 2011, p.228). They continue on to comment that little evidenced based research is available which shows how to implement SWPBS in a culturally responsive way.

Given the narrow success of previous research on the Check-in/Check-out procedure and because of the racial disparity in discipline procedures there is great importance in implementing interventions that provide success for African American students. The purpose of this study is to identify how utilizing a culturally responsive

discourse style will affect the implementation of an evidenced based secondary intervention that relies on a student-teacher relationship.

### **Research questions**

This project will address two specific research questions.

1. What is the relationship between the implementation of a culturally responsive discourse style of Check-in/Check-out on the percentage of points received on a daily point sheet?
2. What is the relationship between the implementation of a culturally responsive discourse style on the Check-in/Check-out intervention and reduction in office discipline referrals?

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### INTRODUCTION

In order to determine how a culturally responsive discourse style may affect the outcomes of the researched based Check-in/Check-out procedure specifically on African American males in a middle school setting it is necessary to review following: 1) SWPBS definition and explanation 2) Research on SWPBS outcomes 3) Types of tier 2 interventions 4) Outcomes for African American students in secondary interventions as a part of the SWPBS system 5) culturally responsive student-teacher interactions.

### *SWPBS definition and explanation*

SWPBS is a system for creating a school wide social culture and individual behavior supports necessary for academic and behavioral success (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). Although the use of SWPBS is a relatively recent practice, its use has increased dramatically over the last twenty years (Sugai, et. al, 2000). Educational researchers (Sugai, et. al, 2000) contend that with the reference to positive behavioral intervention strategies in the amendment to the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1997, began a more concerted effort to create support and effective behavioral interventions for all students. The SWPBS basic structure links research in several areas, such as applied behavior analysis and intervention frameworks which include concepts of universal screening and progress monitoring.

SWPBS provides a set of predictable school wide structures and interventions based on school data. In a recent study, Lynass, Tsai, Richman and Cheney (2012) investigated the types and occurrence of social expectations and behavior indicators on a

national level. The researchers included participants from over 150 schools in 12 regions of the United States. Of the participating schools there were 58 urban schools, 32 suburban schools and 65 rural schools represented with a mean enrollment of 446. Results of the study showed that the top ten social expectations were: 1) respect 2) responsible 3) safety 4) ready to learn 5) care 6) work together 7) do your best 8) attitude 9) kind 10) self-control. The top behavior indicators were described under the heading of respect as 1) kind words and actions 2) voice level 3) listen 4) treat others and property with respect. The authors noted that results of the study suggest that social expectations and behavior indicators in schools are similar and may be a result of national training on SWPBS.

SWPBS entails three levels of support based on specific school discipline data. This is frequently referred to throughout the literature as tiers of support. (Sugai, et. al., 2000; Horner, Sugai & Anderson, 2010; Lynass, Tsai, Richman & Cheney, 2012). The continuum comprises of an increase of support as students require additional assistance meeting expectations. The first level is a school wide effort aimed at preventing inappropriate behavior. Students are taught clear behavior expectations for all the various settings in the school (Turnbull, et. al, 2002). Students receive consistent rewards and consequences for meeting or failing to meet school-wide guidelines. For those students not responding to preventative efforts there is a second level of support (tier 2). Interventions are implemented by a teacher and are frequently designed to encompass consistent data review. Students continuing to have difficulty meeting behavior expectations and not responding to secondary efforts require a third (tier 3) level of intervention (Horner, Sugai & Anderson, 2010). This third level of tertiary support is

individualized and often includes students with the most severe behaviors. Interventions at this stage require more adult support for data collection and closer monitoring (Duda & Utley, 2005).

Horner, et al (2009) characterizes SWPBS as an application of evidenced based behavioral practices. Horner, Sugai and Anderson (2010) used the following criteria to determine that SWPBS is evidenced based: 1) practice is operationally defined 2) setting in which practice is likely to be effective is defined 3) target population (s) are defined 4) qualifications of practitioners is identified 5) expected outcomes are defined 6) conceptual theory and basic framework is evident (Horner, Sugai & Anderson, 2010, p.2).

### ***Research on SWPBS outcomes***

Research outcomes for SWPBS have primarily relied on office disciplinary referrals (ODR) as an indicator of school wide discipline (Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai & Vincent, 2004). Studies have primarily used the number of office discipline referrals (ODR), number of in and out of school suspensions to measure the level of compliance with school rules. McIntosh, Campbell, Carter and Zumbo (2009) investigated using ODRs as a valid indicator of problem behavior. The authors note that office discipline referrals are prevalent throughout the research for several reasons a) availability b) difficulty of direct observation of problem behavior c) usefulness for making decisions at the school and individual level (McIntosh, Campbell, Carter & Zumbo, 2009, p.101). Schools and districts presently collect this type of data for use on district, state and federal reports. With the increase in technology many schools have the capability to collect and analyze the data electronically. Researchers assert that using ODRs are useful

because of the difficulty in being able to directly observe a wide range of behaviors frequently. It requires time and resources that many schools do not have readily available. ODRs are useful in their ability to identify at the school level, patterns in problem behavior and monitor ongoing discipline efforts (Sugai, et al, 2000). Irvin and colleagues (2004) used a previously developed framework to find an evidential basis for interpretations of ODRs. This framework involved a systematic procedure and review of the literature and determined substantiated the use of ODRs is a valid source of data to determine overall school wide discipline and evaluate the effectiveness of a school wide behavioral system. Similarly, McIntosh, Campbell, Carter and Zumbo, (2009) investigated if there was a correlation between individual ODRs with a formal behavior rating scale. Results showed that all individual correlations were in the same direction and the strongest correlation was between ODRs and suspensions ( $r=.76$ ). Correlations between the behavior rating scale, ODRs and school suspensions were statistically significant showing evidence that the use of ODRs to identify students with externalizing behaviors is valid.

SWPBS outcomes have been documented in numerous case studies of individual schools and districts using descriptive statistics to show the effects of implementation of SWPBS on school discipline. Some studies have included academic outcomes while others focus primarily on the decrease in discipline referrals and overall school violence. The majority of studies have taken place at elementary schools using a case study method utilizing descriptive statistics to analyze behavior and academic patterns. In one of the only state-wide investigations of SWPBS, Muscott, Mann and LeBrun (2008) examined the implementation of SWPBS for the state of New Hampshire and saw overall gains for



the state. After approximately 2 years, most schools adopting SWPBS were implementing it with fidelity. Results indicated that execution of the program resulted in a reduction of approximately 6,000 office discipline referrals and over 1000 suspensions. (Muscott, Mann & LeBrun, 2008).

### ***SWPBS at elementary schools***

In order to identify the success of SWPBS on culturally diverse settings, an examination of studies which gave specific information about the ethnic makeup of their demographics is included in this section.

McCurdy, Mannella and Eldridge (2003) completed a case study of an elementary school in a large district. The cultural diversity of the school (44% Asian/Pacific Islanders, 33% African Americans, 18% European Americans, 5% Latino Americans) provides evidence that SWPBS has the potential to be implemented in culturally diverse urban campuses. The school was experiencing significant behavior challenges and began to implement SWPBS. Common area routines and expectations were developed based on campus data. After an examination of multiyear data the results showed a significant decrease in office discipline referrals and student fighting. Similarly, Luiselli, Putnam, Handler and Feinberg (2005) examined an elementary school that self-selected to implement the SWPBS due to discipline issues. School population consisted of approximately 600 students in an urban community in the mid-west. Ethnic distribution of the population was 88% African American, 5% Caucasian, 4% Hispanic, 2% Asian/Pacific and 1% other. Office discipline referrals, suspension rates and academic performance were reviewed by the researchers. A whole school intervention was implemented and training was delivered by an outside consulting firm. Results showed

that average discipline referrals during pre-intervention were 1.3, .73 during intervention and .54 in follow-up. For suspensions, average during pre-intervention was .31, .25 in intervention and .20 in follow-up. The Metropolitan Achievement Test was used to measure academic performance. Reading percentages increased 18 points while the school also saw a 25 point increase in math scores. Results confirm the overall positive effects on the campus due to the implementation of a SWPBS model. Data were also collected on staff perception of the implementation and implementation of the SWPBS. Staff surveys revealed that the development of campus behavior teams and the professional development were instrumental in the success of the program. Although this study was implemented on an ethnically diverse campus there is no discussion of how the implementation of the SWPBS development may have incorporated culturally responsive pedagogy to increase its success.

In another case study regarding SWPBS implementation (Jones, Caravaca, Horner and Vincent, 2006) the focus of this case study was to understand the implementation of a SWPBS model on a primarily Native American elementary student body (99% Dine Navajo). School wide behavior expectations were identified based on campus data. The PBS team regularly analyzed campus discipline data and made changes to the development of the program based on their understanding of the cultural diversity of the student population. Researchers highlighted that at first the SWPBS plan was not working and after reviewing their discipline data and student reactions to the rules, it was necessary to re-vamp their school wide expectations. As a result of the data, changes were necessary. School leadership used cultural influences of the Dine Navajo to create culturally appropriate school wide discipline procedures. Results show that after creating

a cultural responsive SWPBS program, student discipline referrals decreased dramatically and were the third lowest among other elementary schools in the state that were formally collecting discipline data (Jones, Caravaca, Horner & Vincent, 2006, p. 115).

Horner, Sugai, Smolkowski, Eber, Nakasato, Todd and Esperanza (2009) completed a study using a randomized wait-list controlled effectiveness trial with groups of elementary schools. The significance of this method was that the experimental assessment was conducted for usual educational settings and conditions. The researchers used schools in Illinois and Hawaii. The research was conducted over the course of 4 years from 2002 and 2006. Percentage of non-White ethnicities average was at 61% for the schools in the study. Research questions aimed to identify the effect of SWPBS on reduced levels of ODRs, perceived levels of safety and numbers of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders who met reading standards. Although in the Chicago sample there were several instances of school attrition due to school closures and changes in school administration. Overall results showed general positive outcomes for schools implementing SWPBS. Specifically, as it pertained to perceived safety there was a significant decrease in risk after training for both the treatment and control/delay group. ODRs were reviewed and were generally lower than the national average, however the authors concede that this could not be necessarily attributed to the use of SWPBS and noted that more research should be done with this methodology to increase the literature base.

### ***SWPBS at secondary schools***

SWPBS has been documented in the literature primarily with elementary schools (March & Horner, 2000; Colvin & Fernandez, 2000; Flannery, Sugai & Anderson, 2009). Although the bulk of studies on SWPBS have been conducted at the elementary level

there are several studies which show promising results for secondary campuses. However research on the implementation of SWPBS at the secondary level has also documented significant challenges. Survey results from an investigation by Flannery, Sugai and Anderson (2009) identified challenges for implementing SWPBS in high schools. Respondents identified the following barriers: lack of administrative support, negative staff attitudes resistant to change, lack of time to review data, difficulty with older students buying into the process. However, despite these challenges some secondary schools have successfully implemented SWPBS. Bohanon, et al (2006) set out to identify the ways in which SWPBS could be implemented at an urban high school and to evaluate the effects of the implementation on school wide discipline. The study took place in a Chicago public high school with the following ethnic makeup: 36% African American, 36% Hispanic, 16% Asian American, 8% Caucasian, 2% Native American and 2% other. Using ODRs as a measurement of overall school discipline the results showed that in year 1 of the implementation of SWPBS the average number of referrals was 5,215. In year 3 of the implementation average number of referrals for the year was 4,339, a 20% reduction in average daily referrals. As another source of data, the researchers also highlighted that there was a reduction in severe discipline behaviors, for example, serious disobedience of authority went from 1.64 per every 100 students to .05 per every 100 students (Bohanan, et al, 2006, p. 140).

Lane, Wehby, Roberston and Rogers (2007) sought to extend the literature on SWPBS by investigating the impact on SWPBS on certain types of secondary students, collecting data on suspensions, grade point average, referrals and tardiness. There were a total of 178 students in the sample, with the following ethnicities represented: Caucasian

= 157, 88%, Hispanics=4, 2%, African Americans= 12, 6%, Asians = 3, 1%), Native Americans = 2, 1%. Participants for this investigation were from two high schools that were participating in a longitudinal study examining the implementation of a SWPBS program at the high school level. Teachers from the high schools nominated specific students for the investigation. Based on a modified social skills behavior rating form, students were divided into the following behavior categories: externalizing, internalizing, comorbid, and typical. The experimental design was a group  $\times$  time repeated measures model. The groups were based on the aforementioned behavioral categories, and time (1: before PBS model implementation and time 2: the first year of PBS implementation) was the repeated measure. Results show that for grade point average, effect sizes for students characterized as internalizing and high incidence groups showed the most improvement. Outcomes for suspensions showed low to moderate decreases for all groups and the greatest for students in the internalized category. For the variable of discipline contact outcomes were not significant by any group. Although moderate, researchers presented outcomes that were generally reported in a “promising direction” for students in most of the identified behavior categories. As it pertains to race and ethnicity, while the majority of the students in the sample were White, there was no discussion of certain types of students as it pertains to race and/or ethnicity and results of this study are limited in its opportunity to increase the evidence that the implementation of a SWPBS model is beneficial for culturally diverse secondary students.

### ***Tier 2 Interventions***

Secondary interventions are aimed at students who require additional assistance for success. Debnam, Pas and Bradshaw's (2012) research on secondary and tertiary supports report that students who meet requirements for additional support are provided specific interventions to target a specific skill or meet a behavioral goal. The three-tiered SWPBS model encourages the use of all the tiers for students not responding to school wide systems. Crone and Horner (2003) provide a model for implementing a SWPBS model which includes a support team on the campus that reviews student data and progress. This "school support team" (SST) reviews the data and identifies behavior interventions aimed at increasing appropriate behavior strategies (Crone & Horner, 2003).

Sugai and Horner (2006) note the process of providing targeted interventions can be difficult for schools particularly if they are not implementing a strong SWPBS program. Data from a recent study of the implementation of tier 2 and 3 support systems at elementary schools show interesting findings (Debnam, Pas & Bradshaw, 2012). One finding suggest that most schools do have student support teams with the purpose of reviewing data and identifying necessary interventions for students, however there is a lack of consistency in the meeting of these teams and development of necessary intervention plans. Second, the interventions that were chosen were not evidenced based and not implemented with fidelity. These results support the conclusion that students who require additional behavioral support may continue to struggle behaviorally due to a lack of researched based interventions implemented by inadequately trained staff (Debnam, Pas & Bradshaw, 2012).

Bambara, Nonemacher and Kern (2009) also investigated the use of school teams to support individualized positive behavior supports. Findings from their investigation show that an unsupportive school culture, lack of professional development and lack of administrative support were impediments to the effectiveness of the school teams to provide effective individual behavior supports (Bambara, Nonemacher & Kern, 2009). The researchers noted school culture as the most “pervasive theme” to the implementation of individual supports within a SWPBS framework. Participant responses noted that there are frequently conflicting beliefs and practices by school personnel. Misperceptions of the goals of the individualized program include a misunderstanding of the behavior intervention and a belief that students who need additional support are receiving special treatment (Bambara, Nonemacher & Kern, 2009, p.167).

For the last 10 years, the most prevalent tier two interventions used within a SWPBS model have been the following: Behavior Education Program (Hawken & Horner, 2003; Crone & Horner, 2003); Check-in/Check-out (Simonsen, Myers & Briere, 2011; Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino & Lathrop, 2007; McCurdy, Kunsch, Reibstein, 2007; McIntosh, Campbell, Carter & Dickey, 2009; Todd, Campbell, Meyer & Horner, 2008; Hawken, MacLeod & Rawlings, 2007; Hawken & Horner, 2003); Check & Connect (Sinclair, Christenson & Thurlow, 2005; Lehr, Sinclair, & Christenson, 2004); Check, Connect and Expect (Cheney, Stage, Hawken, Lynass, Mielenz & Waugh, 2009).

*Behavior Education Program*, (BEP) is a program which delivers the student with immediate behavior feedback on his/her behavior through a daily progress report and increases positive adult attention (Crone & Horner, 2003). Early studies of the BEP, (March & Horner, 2002; Hawken & Horner, 2003) show that use of the program within

the SWPBS model resulted in reductions of office discipline referrals. Hawken and Horner (2003) used a multiple baseline study in a rural middle school yielded positive results, however participant demographic information was not collected. Likewise, March & Horner (2002) completed a multiple baseline across subjects design using the BEP program in conjunction with a functional behavior analysis for students not initially responding to the BEP. Outcomes show that students had significant increases in academic engagement and decreases in problem behavior. However, the lack of demographic data does not allow us to generalize the results across race/ethnicity. Hawken, MacLeod & Rawlings (2007) investigated the implementation of the BEP in an urban elementary school in which they note 38% were from a minority background. Using a multiple baseline design across groups, 12 students were selected and 2 were reported to be from “minority backgrounds.” Using ODRs as the dependent variable results show that for overall ODRs per month 9 students showed reductions in average referrals per month and at least one group demonstrated the smallest change (Hawken, MacLeod & Rawlings, 2007, p.97). The authors contend that based on previous research some students do not respond to the BEP when adult attention is not reinforcing. However, without additional information regarding the student or interventionist it is impossible to rule out what other factors, cultural or otherwise could impact the execution of the intervention.

*Check & connect* (Sinclair, Christenson & Thurlow, 2005) is a tier 2 intervention which involves systematic monitoring of student progress and relationship building to increase appropriate behavior and academic progress for at risk students, a variation of the BEP. Lehr, Sinclair and Christenson (2004) investigated the use of Check & Connect



on elementary aged students. Utilizing absences as a measurement of student engagement, researchers showed progress for students who received the intervention for at least 2 years. In another study, Sinclair, Christenson and Thurlow (2005) specifically measured the use of this intervention with students who were receiving special education services. The participants for the intervention were students identified with an Individual Education Program (IEP) and identified as having an emotional or behavioral disability or other health impairment when the IEP included behavioral goals. The researchers completed a longitudinal experimental design with random assignment of participants. Sixty four percent of the sample was African American and 84% of the sample was male. Interestingly and aligned with research on disproportionality, when analyzing the subgroup, data showed that 78% of African American male students in the group had emotional and/or behavioral disorder as the primary disability (Sinclair, Christenson & Thurlow, 2005, p. 470). Outcome measures included rates of dropout, mobility, and completion rates. Dropout rate for students in the intervention group was 39% versus 58% for students in the control group. Although still disconcerting, attendance rates were improved for students in the intervention group, 69% of study participants had steady attendance throughout the second year of high school however this percentage steadily declined through year four. Only 24% were still enrolled in school at the end of 4 years.

Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, and Lehr (2004) attempted to identify how the role of the relationship between students and staff using Check & Connect was associated with student behavioral outcomes. Outcomes were measured using attendance as an indicator of behavioral engagement and a teacher rating scale designed to measure student social and academic engagement. Participants were selected that had received the

Check & Connect intervention for almost 2 years, starting in elementary school. Seventy-one percent of the student participants were of European descent and the majority was still in elementary school when the study began. Results showed that the likelihood of improving attendance was almost 3 times greater for every unit increase in the check & connect monitor survey average and 4 times greater for every unit increase in the student survey average (Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair & Lehr, 2004, p. 101). The Check & connect monitor scales which measured the closeness and quality of relationships with students was also a predictor of teacher reported academic engagement. However, the results also showed that how the monitor and student perceived their relationship were not significant predictors of social engagement. Although the authors assert that their results provide evidence that the relationship between the check & connect monitor is a predictor of student engagement, they concede that the tool used to assess the measurement of the social and academic engagement was a “project derived” tool. While this investigation does support other studies which discuss the role of positive relationships in educating students, their results also show that students classified at a higher risk level were less likely to have positive social engagement. Theorist have postulated that culturally diverse students, specifically African-American males are inherently at a higher risk than their white counterparts and therefore the role of adult relationships in the success of this intervention is a significant issue and the discussion is absent from this study.

Check, Connect and Expect (CCE) is a tier 2 intervention which depends on specific school staff to supervise and provide feedback to students with behavior problems. The check element requires that the mentor daily monitor the student for

problems that could result in disciplinary action. While the connect element refers to the mentor creating a positive relationship with the student. This includes providing daily feedback and discussing progress and possible barriers. The expect portion of the intervention includes lessons from social skills curriculum as needed based on student data. Tsai and Cheney (2012) specify using curriculum such as *The Stop and Think Social Skill Program*, curriculum published by Knopf. This intervention became an intersection of two programs the Check & Connect (Sinclair, Christenson & Thurlow, 2005) and the Behavior Education Program (Crone and Horner, 2003). Cheney, Stage, Hawken, Lynass, Mielenz and Waugh (2009) conducted a large scale study involving 18 elementary schools to investigate the outcomes of CCE on 200 students. Researchers used hierarchical linear modeling to analyze outcome measures based on social skills, academic engagement and academic achievement. Overall results showed that for the 60% of students that met the criteria to graduate from the program, there was a reduction in their problem behaviors as rated by the teachers. Demographically, results showed that female and White students most often completed the CCE program. Program completion signified higher ratings on positive behavior. Further, the authors note that Hispanic students were less likely to complete the program and upon scrutiny of the data in Table 1 it is evident that only half the African American participants were graduates of the CCE program (Cheney, Stage, Hawken, Lynass, Mielenz & Waugh, 2009, p. 235). Due to demographic differences apparent in the results, the authors propose that because CCE was presented as a scripted and possibly rigid intervention, educators did not deviate from the protocols. Additionally, they assert that the educators own culture and beliefs influenced their interactions and perceptions of culturally diverse students.

Tsai and Cheney (2012) explored the role of the adult-child relationship in the Check, Connect and Expect program. Similar to the Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, and Lehr (2004) study, the goal of the study was to determine if the strength of the relationship was associated with positive outcomes for students in the CCE intervention. Student participants were selected who had been in the intervention 2 years. Related to the previous study by Anderson and colleagues, the sample included elementary school students who were primarily males and Caucasian. The Student-Teacher Relationship Scale was used to measure teacher-student relationship and CCE monitor perception of their student relationship. Teachers used the *Social Skills Rating System* and the *Engagement in School-Teaching Rating Scale*, to rate students. Data on reinforcers provided to students was tracked by the CCE monitors and Data were collected to identify the amount of positive reinforcement received by the students. Results showed that the CCE monitor and student relationship did not predict the variation of problem behavior. However, the relationship between teacher and student did contribute significantly to the variance in problem behaviors. The results suggest that the connection of the CCE monitor and the student was not as influential as the teacher-student relationship and only contributed to an increase in social skills but not for problem behavior. The authors noted as one of the limitations, that in comparison to the teachers, students overall received more positive behavior ratings and because the CCE monitor was not the primary disciplinarian some of the survey results could have been biased. Researchers also maintained that the study did not include any student survey information which would have provided an opportunity for students to explain personal feelings about

their CCE monitors and teachers. Similar to the previous study by Anderson, this investigation does not have a discussion or consideration of culturally diverse students.

Check-in/Check-out is a secondary level intervention frequently used within a SWPBS framework that has been shown as being effective (Todd, Campbell, Meyer & Horner, 2008; Filter, McKenna, Benedict, Horner, Todd & Watson, 2007; Hawken & Horner, 2003; Hawken, MacLeod & Rawlings, 2007; March & Horner, 2002). It has been implemented in both elementary schools (Campbell & Anderson, 2008; Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino & Lathrop, 2007; Filter et al., 2007; Hawken, MacLeod & Rawlings, 2007; Todd, Kaufman, Meyer & Horner, 2008) and middle school levels (Simonsen, Myers & Briere, 2011; Hawken & Horner, 2003; March & Horner, 2002). Debnam, Pas and Bradshaw (2012) in a study of secondary supports for schools implementing SWPBS found that the Check-in/Check-out was the most commonly used secondary intervention. The process, much like the BEP program and frequently used interchangeably in the literature, involves the use of a daily behavior report card. Todd, Campbell, Meyer and Horner (2008) found that the elementary students using this intervention gave the students the following: 1) structure and prompts 2) adult written feedback 3) visual reminders of goals 4) data collection and 5) school to home communication (Todd, Campbell, Meyer & Horner, 2008, p.47). A study by Hawken and Horner (2003) also included a process in which students were to take their daily reports home in order to increase family collaboration. Likewise Todd and colleagues (2008) also added a home component to increase family support. Filter and colleagues (2007) noted that this portion of the Check-in/Check-out intervention was implemented with the least fidelity.

The majority of studies on Check-in/Check-out have used the frequency of ODRs to determine whether or not students are responding to the intervention. Dependent variables regularly used throughout investigations on Check-in/Check-out include aggression, classroom disruption, off task behavior and elopement (Campbell & Anderson, 2008). Campbell and Anderson (2008) as well as Hawken & Horner (2003) also encompassed positive academic behaviors such as academic engagement.

Additionally, researchers have included social validity measures including a behavior acceptability questionnaire (Hawken & Horner, 2003) and Likert scale rating forms (Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino & Lathrop, 2007; Filter et al., 2007) with teacher, parent, and student responses indicating that they saw improved behavior of the participants, a willingness to continue the use of the Check-in/Check-out in the future, and a willingness to recommend Check-in/Check-out to others.

While a majority of studies report the general effectiveness of the Check-in/Check-out intervention with improvements in behavior for all students, not all students respond. Researchers have posited that students with attention seeking behaviors will be most responsive to Check-in/Check-out because of the individual daily contact from an adult (Filter et al., 2007; March & Horner, 2002; Todd, Kaufman, Meyer, & Horner, 2008). Further, it is hypothesized that those students who do not show behavioral improvements in response to the intervention may demonstrate behavior maintained by something other than attention. However, researchers have not definitively concluded the reasons that some students respond and further research is needed to develop the nuances of the Check-in/Check-out procedure that may include increased success among students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

### ***Check-in/Check-out Outcomes for African American Students***

Although generally effective, results on Check-in/Check-out intervention specifically implemented with African American students has been variable. A review of recent Check-in/Check-out studies disaggregated by race and ethnicity is listed in Table 1. Generally African American students were less represented in the studies and outcomes were less positive.

Vincent, Tobin, Hawken and Frank (2012) investigated the race and ethnic distribution of students receiving secondary interventions in 155 elementary schools and 55 middle schools. Researchers used descriptive analysis and primarily focused on African American, Latino and Caucasian ethnicities, particularly due to small n sizes of the other ethnicities. Outcomes showed that in both elementary and middle school African American students were over represented in office discipline referrals. In the elementary setting, African American students were more likely to receive a secondary intervention (Check-in/Check-out) and the results showed lower ODRs. However in the middle school setting, results showed that African-American students were over-represented among ODRs however were less likely to receive the secondary intervention. The authors concluded that in the middle school setting factors other than the accumulation of ODRs must have been used to identify students for secondary interventions. However their study does not shed light on what these factors may have been.

Simonsen, Myers and Briere (2011) completed a study in an urban middle school using the Check-in/Check-out intervention. Utilizing a randomized pre-test/post-test design there were 27 students in the intervention group of which 2 were African

American, and 14 students in the control group. Using structured observations the researchers found that the effect sizes for students in the intervention group was large (-.90) and the students were engaging significantly less in off task behavior. Although ODRs are listed in the researchers table data as an outcome, the authors do not discuss this outcome measure in detail. However, upon review of the table it is clear that there are little differences between the mean ODRs pre and posttest for students in the intervention group. Further, the authors conclude that their results should be examined with caution due to the overall small sample size and the unequal subgroup sizes. The results of this study add to the literature great concern for students at the middle level and their responses to secondary interventions.

McCurdy, Kunsch and Reibstein (2007) and Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino and Lathrop (2007) both investigated the use of Check-in/Check-out with relatively small sample sizes and each of their studies have one African American participant and in both studies the intervention did not result in positive outcomes. McCurdy, Kunsch and Reibstein (2007) used a multiple baseline across three subjects measuring percentage of daily points earned and while the other 2 Anglo students in the study had variable behavior, the Anglo female student was able to maintain 80% positive points through the duration of the study. While the African American student began with 80% positive points the authors remarked that his behavior “deteriorated” and teachers stated that this was due to “problems at home.” Similarly, Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino & Lathrop (2007) implemented a study with 10 students of which 1 was African American to identify if there would be a decrease in problem behaviors observed. Results showed that out of the 10, the African American student’s was one of the 6 students who did not respond well to



the intervention. Specifically this student's mean of problem behavior was 28% throughout the study and the authors note he maintained increasing levels of problem behavior in comparison to peers in the study.

Studies by Hawken, O'Neill and MacLeod (2011) and Hawken, MacLeod and Rawlings (2007) and Filter, McKenna, Benedict, Horner, Todd and Watson (2007) provide data on the overall success of the Check-in/Check-out intervention. While Filter and colleagues do not give specific data on ethnic makeup they provide information on percent of nonwhites by school ranged from 16% to 25% nonwhite schools. Results yielded general positive outcomes for 67% of the participants decreased daily ODR from approximately 1 ODR every 5 days to 1 every 8 (Filter, et al, 2007, p.79). In another study Hawken, MacLeod and Rawlings (2007) the researchers examined the impact of the intervention on 12 students and reported that 75% of the participants showed reductions in discipline referrals, there was no discussion or disaggregation of race and/or ethnicity. Similarly, Hawken and colleagues (2011) reported outcomes for students in the Check-in/Check-out intervention with 17 students of which three were described as "ethnic minorities." Results of this study showed that in elementary school 1 70% of the participants showed less ODR and 80% in school 2 had less ODRs. Although these are moderately successful results it is difficult to ascertain whether or not the intervention serves culturally diverse students well due to the vague reporting of ethnicity.

In contrast, Todd, Campbell, Meyer & Horner (2008) completed a single case design with 4 students in which 1 was an African American male at the elementary level. The African American student's percentage of problem behavior at baseline was 34%, which was almost 20% higher than the scores for his peers in the study. However, results

for this African American student were comparable to the other students, with average ODRs per day going from .15 at baseline to 0.0.

Table 1. Review of Studies on Check-in/Check-out

Citation	n	n ethnicities	Experimental Design	Outcome Measures	Results
Vincent, Tobin, Hawken & Frank (2012)	Elementary n = 372	Elementary: 72= HA* 162=AA ** 138=White	Effect regression models	Office Discipline Referrals	Elementary= decreases in ODR HA:M = -.42, SD 3.04 AA:M = -.88, SD 3.92 White: M = -.35, SD = 4.28
<i>Elementary &amp; Middle School Sample</i>	Middle n= 159	Middle: 35=HA 48=AA 76= White			MS= HA:M = 1.57, SD = 5.78 AA:M = -2.4, SD = 4.88 White: M= .86, SD = 5.63
Campbell & Anderson (2011)	n=4	3=A 1=L	Reversal design	Problem behaviors	Kyle B=37% CICO=12%
<i>Elementary</i>					Mike B=28% CICO=11%
					Nick (L) B=28% CICO=8%
					Paul B=23% CICO=16%
Simonsen, Myers & Briere (2011)	27 (21 boys, 6 girls)	Intervention: 22-L*** 3-A 2- AA	Randomized pretest/posttest control group design	Structured Direct Observation (SDO) SSRS	SDO CICO: pre=.46 post=.31 SP: pre=.40 post=.37
<i>Middle Grades (5-8)</i>		Control: 11=L 2-A 1-AA	Compared students enrolled in CICO to Standard Practice (SP)		ODR CICO: pre=2.93 post=2.70 SP: pre=2.20

Table 1 (continued)

post=3.20

**For all SSRS subscales results indicated that moderate effect sizes favored SP conditions**

Campbell & Anderson (2008)	n=2	1=AA 1=White	ABCBC reversal design	Problem behaviors	Joe (W) B=54% CICO=31% Modified CICO=7%
<i>Elementary</i>					Kyle(AA) B=56% CICO=27% Modified CICO=12%
Hawken, MacLeod, Rawlings (2007)	12 (10 boys, 2 girls)	2-not specific on race or ethnicity	Multiple baseline across groups	Office discipline referrals	-75% showed reductions in average referrals per month
<i>Elementary</i>					
Todd, Campbell, Meyer & Horner (2008)	4 (boys)	2-(1 AA;1-Native American)	Multiple baseline across subjects	Office discipline referrals-per day	1-.16 2-0.0 3-0.0 4-0.0
<i>Elementary</i>					
Filter, McKenna, Benedict, Horner, Todd & Watson (2007)	19 (only given numbers for 12)	No ethnicity specifics-Only describes % Nonwhite by school	Quasi-experimental design	Office discipline referrals	Positive results for 67% of participants;1 ODR every 8.4 days versus 1 every 5.59
<i>Elementary</i>					
McCurdy, Kunsch, Reibstein (2007)	3(2 boys, 1 girl)	1-AA male 1-Anglo male 1-Anglo female	Multiple baseline across subjects	Percentage of points earned daily (number of points divided by number possible)	1. Anglo female: above 80% for duration 2. Anglo Male: behavior variable throughout intervention 3. AA male: began at 80% deteriorated at end
<i>Elementary</i>					
Hawken, O'Neill,	17(11 males, 6 females)	3 "ethnic minority"	pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design	average number of office discipline	School 1-(71%) showed reductions in ODRs and for School 2-(80%) showed reductions

Table 1 (continued)

MacLeod (2011)			(the effects of the BEP intervention on office discipline referrals)	referrals (ODRs) per student per week	in ODRs.
<i>Elementary</i>			descriptive quasi- experimental design	Problem behavior	4 of 10 were responsive
Fairbanks, S, Sugai, G, Guardino, D., & Lathrop, M (2007)	10 (5 male;5 female)	1-Native American female 1-AA male	10-s partial interval recording system for 40-min observations		Randy (mean intervals with problem behavior, 32% range. 0%- 63%) and AA--Farrell (mean intervals with problem behavior, 28% range. 5%- 38%) increasing levels of problem behavior, compared to composite peer comparisons
<i>Elementary</i>					

---

\*HA-Hispanic American, \*\*AA-African American, \*\*\*-Latino

### *Culturally Responsive Discourse Style*

One of the integral features of the Check-in/Check-out procedures relies on daily feedback from an adult on the campus. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the literature specific to student-teacher relationships. Socio-cultural theory has indicated that relationships between students and teachers influence social and academic outcomes (Davis, 2003). There are many studies that explore the relationship between students and teachers (Milner, 2011; Bondy, Ross, Gallingane and Hambacher, 2007); Davis, 2003; Brown, 2004). Broadly, educational literature on the concept of school connectedness includes perceptions of teacher quality and the importance of student-teacher relationships to ensuing academic attainment. In an examination of students in Texas, Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005) determined that an increase in teacher quality had significant effects on student achievement in both reading and mathematics. Similarly, in a policy report by ACT, Inc., Wimberly (2002) found that the following school relationship characteristics: school personnel expectations, teachers talking with students, and extracurricular activities were significant factors for African American students as it relates to later educational accomplishment. However, more recent qualitative work has provided research that aims to critically examine the student-teacher relationship particularly as it pertains to African American students.

Research outcomes from student-teacher interaction research identifies that the discourse style of teachers is an important factor in the student-teacher relationship. Results show that teachers who have a specific discourse style have positive responses

from culturally diverse students (Milner, 2011; Bondy, Ross, Galligan and Hambacher, 2007). Weinstein, Curran and Tomilson-Clarke (2003) highlighted the role of communicating with students in a culturally responsive way as an integral part of the management plans for teachers who were successful with culturally diverse students. For example, the authors highlight experiences of a White teacher, teaching predominately Haitian children. In her interactions with the students, she learned that referring to students individual internal states was not as successful as focusing on the values of group membership when discussing student behavior (p.272).

In order to increase the knowledge of educators on the importance of relationships, McHugh, Horner, Colditz and Wallace (2013) aimed to identify specific processes that students reported fostered positive teacher interactions. Results of their qualitative study identified the concept of *bridging* which was defined as interactions which fostered positive relationship development and/or brought students and teachers closer interpersonally. Student respondents reported that teachers should engage in what the researchers identified as *effortful engagement* as something students thought teachers should do reflected the students' desire for teachers to ask them about their day, paying attention to their concerns and needs. Overwhelmingly, students identified this process of effortful engagement as a sign that the teachers actually cared about them. Results also revealed that to preserve school functioning, students at risk are in specific need of supportive relationships with teachers.

Bernstein-Yamashiro (2004) investigated the teacher-student relationship at the secondary level. Teachers who participated in this study believed that warm relationships

were instrumental to effective pedagogy: Students in this study argued that they do not and cannot separate their emotions from their intellects. School is a place where adolescent identity is constantly forming and changing. It happens in hallways, in classrooms, on playing fields, and with teachers, friends, and coaches. Schools do not need to create life skills classes to contribute to students' emerging identities. But by ignoring students' needs for adult support and wisdom and not acknowledging the complex interaction of affect and intellect, schools fail to maximize students' growth and teachers' understanding.

In a qualitative investigation of school connectedness among ethnically diverse students from Asia and Latin American countries, Ozer, Wolf and Kong (2008) found that the adolescents experienced attention from their teachers through modes such as discussing problems or seeking advice. Researchers also noted more than half of the respondents reported respect for teacher was based upon their views of effective teaching while those same adolescents maintained that they lost respect for teachers who did not seem to care whether students understood the academic material. In study aimed to identify the cultural competence of a White teacher with ethnically diverse students, Milner (2011) found that the teacher had developed the skills to not only acknowledge racial differences but discuss commonalities between himself and his students. The teacher used previous conflicts that had arisen due to culturally dissonance as an opportunity to have frank conversations and he ultimately built positive connections with his students.



Bondy, Ross, Galligane and Hambacher, (2007) explored the practices of teachers who were deemed to engage in culturally responsive practices with classes in which almost 100% of the student population was African American. Researchers noted that while the teachers displayed their own personal styles of communicating, they shared similar communication methods. The researchers described four aspects of the teacher's discourse style which included the following: use of familiar words and expressions, references to popular culture, call-and-response interaction patterns, and the use of straightforward directives. As a means to making connections to the students, the teachers used words and expressions in which the students were accustomed. The authors pointed out that this was not only displayed by the teacher who was African American, but other teachers were also able to use affective familiar phrases. By the same token, the teachers were able to make connections to the students through popular culture. Finally, the authors noted that the call-and-response interaction pattern is a familiar communication style within the African American community and incorporating this style of communication prompted students to actively engage and participate in classroom activities. While teachers used humor and familiar language with students, the use of straightforward and direct instructions was utilized to provide clear expectations. The teachers were taken seriously by the students because they used a firm communication style that did not leave any ambiguity about what to expect with regard to rules and classroom etiquette. In similar studies by Brown (2004) and Ware (2006) researchers were able to show that teachers who taught with assertiveness while maintaining respectful dialogue towards avoided power struggles and refrained from using

humiliation tactics to gain compliance. Likewise, teachers used familiar verbal and nonverbal communication practices with the straightforward style while incorporating cultural humor.

African American students frequently experience a greater need than for developing close relationships with teachers than their white counterparts (McHugh, Horner, Colditz & Wallace, 2013; Brown, 2004). Based on current literature culturally responsive discourse style has an integral role in examining the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships on an intervention that requires frequent teacher feedback.

### *Research Needed*

While the research has concluded the need to implement culturally responsive techniques and while specifically engaging in a culturally responsive discourse style yields positive perceptions among African American students these claims are overwhelming discussed in the context of general classroom management settings. There are ample studies examining the effects of SWPBS on student behavior, however there is a gap in the literature that consistently yield positive individualized results for culturally diverse students, specifically African American students within a SWPBS. In a recent review of current literature related to SWPBS and culture, Fallon and colleagues (2012) attempted to identify contextually relevant strategies documented in research focused on behavior and found that few empirical studies had a focus on culture and behavior management. For example, Goh and Bambara (2012) completed a meta-analysis of individual positive behavior support interventions in school settings. Participant

characteristics included, grade level, gender, classification label and classroom placement. The authors concluded that publication of individualized interventions appear to be increasing and the effectiveness of Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) based interventions show moderate effect sizes for increasing appropriate behavior. However, their results provide no indication of the effectiveness for cultural diverse students. The entire meta-analysis is void of the topic or provides outcomes disaggregated by race and/or ethnicity. Gersten, et al (2005) emphasizes that essential indicators for experimental research is describing participants in terms of demographics is race, ethnicity, gender and socio economic status.

Vincent and Tobin (2011) investigated 77 urban schools implementing SWPBS to identify if the use of the program resulted in a reduction of classroom exclusions for minority children and to what extent. Extending previous research on SWPBS implementation, they investigated the use of ODRs which resulted in home suspension and length of such suspensions. Overall results showed that for elementary and high schools the rate of out of school suspensions decreased, however not at all at the middle school level. Specifically at the high school level decreases in out of school suspensions were associated with settings outside of the classroom. Suspensions related to classroom behavior remained relatively the same. As it pertained to the demographic distribution in number of days students were excluded, exclusions for Hispanic and White students decreased from time 1 to time 2, however the number of days excluding African American students increased even though researchers noted that the increase was not considered statistically significant (p.226). Similarly, the representation of Hispanic and

White students was underrepresented in long term exclusions, however African American students were over represented in long term suspensions at both time 1 and time 2. The authors maintain that further research is needed regarding the relationship between SWPBS and exclusionary patterns and practices; however I contend that the data seems relatively clear and it is necessary for educators, research and practitioners to create effective school environments for culturally diverse students.

Based upon the literature review results presented here, it is necessary to examine the extent to which the Check-in/Check-out intervention can be successful for African American students at the middle school level. Particularly if outcomes for other groups with similar behaviors has been successful, there is a need to examine the role that race/ethnicity plays in the implementation of secondary interventions. Moreover, using the framework outlined by Crone, Hawken and Horner (2010) the researchers contend that implementers of the Check-in/Check-out must be culturally appropriate specifically to the interactions between the student and Check-in/Check-out monitor. The authors contend that these personal interactions must be culturally appropriate and include components of culturally competent corrective feedback. Cultural responsiveness involves focusing not only on student behaviors but the relationship between the students and interventionist. Current research suggests that without intervention, African American males continue to be at risk for mislabeling and disparate discipline practices (Kern, 2009). The purpose of this study is to identify whether or not the Check-in/Check-out intervention, implemented within a SWPBS system are effective at

reducing ODR and increasing on-task behavior for African American students while using a culturally responsive discourse style.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHOD**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to describe this study's methodology. In the first section, the setting of the study is described. The next section details the student and teacher participants. In the fourth section, the dependent variables and data collection procedures are given. The last section describes the experimental design, independent variables, and intervention procedures.

### ***Setting***

The study took place in an urban school district in Texas. District population in the 2013-2014 school year was over 85,000 with approximately 60% of Latino descent, 8% African American, 25% White, 3.7% Asian and .3% Native American. Sixty-one percent of the students are considered economically disadvantaged and 27% are classified as limited English proficient. District special education enrollment is 9.9% of the total population. According to the Texas Education Agency's performance based monitoring system, the district has an over-representation of African-American students in special education. African Americans comprise 8% of the total enrollment and 18% of students receiving special education services. Table 2 provides basic demographic information of the district and campus.

Table 2. Demographic Information

	Total Enrollment	Economically Disadvantaged	Special Education	African American	Hispanic	White	Limited English Proficient
<i>District</i>	85,014	61%	9.9%	8%	60%	25%	27%
<i>Campus</i>	551	96%	20%	8%	88%	.9%	28%

The study was conducted at one of the 18 middle schools in the District. The school is located in what can be described as a lower socioeconomic neighborhood. Within the school, approximately 96% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. The racial profile of the school is approximately 8% African-American, 88% Latino and .9% Caucasian. The campus has an *Improvement Required* rating by the Texas Education Agency for failure to meet student progress measures.

The campus utilizes a SWPBS program called SOAR. School-wide behavior expectations include the following: 1) use appropriate language 2) use good manners 3) walk only 4) show respect at all times 5) use inside voices. The campus recognizes students as SOARing Eagles and provides positive feedback in the form of “shout outs” and privileges that include participation in select after school activities.

### ***Student Participants***

Five ethnically diverse male students considered at risk were chosen for this study. Table 3 reports participants' information including age, grade and ethnic background. All participants were between the ages of eleven and thirteen years old.

Michael was a 13 year old African-American male at-risk for being referred to special education due to aggressive behaviors and behaviors described by his teachers as bullying. During the first semester of the 2013-2014 school year, Michael received 8 discipline referrals. He received 2 referrals for fighting, 1 for threat/harassment to an adult, 3 for threats to students, 1 for insubordination and 1 for class disruption. These discipline infractions resulted in a total of 7 days of home suspension and 8 days of in-school suspensions. Other discipline consequences documented included lunch and after school detentions and short term removals from class. The Functional Assessment Checklist (FACTS) completed by his teachers further identified the following behaviors of concern: making fun of others, truancy, tardiness, work refusal and consistent use of profanity. Teachers reported that they perceived him as a bully and viewed him as a safety risk.

James was an 11 year old male in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. As reported by family the student was of African-American and Latino descent and frequently referred to himself as "mixed." During the fall of the 2013-2014 school year, James had received the following discipline referrals: 1 for fighting, 4 for insubordination and 2 for threats to students. These disciplinary issues resulted in 3 days of home suspension and 4 days of in school



suspensions. The FACTS completed by his teachers further revealed these additional behavioral concerns: inappropriate language to peers, unresponsive to adult demands and attempts at inappropriate touching of other students.

George was a 13 year old 8<sup>th</sup> grader at risk of a referral for special education services due to his consistent insubordination and aggression. During the fall semester he received a total of 10 referrals: fighting (2), rude to adult (2), leaving campus without authorization (2), class disruption (3) and physical aggression to a student (1). These behaviors resulted in a total of 6 days of home suspension and 5 days of in-school suspension. Teachers also reported almost daily classroom removals to the hall way for constant class disruption. Other behaviors of concern reported on the FACTS were: walking out of classroom without permission, tardiness, sleeping in class, not bringing materials to class and profanity.

Charles was a 12 year old bi-racial (African-American and Latino) student considered at risk and in need of intervention. During the fall of the 2013-2014 school year the student obtained 19 discipline referrals. He received 9 for classroom disruption, 3 for fighting, 4-threat/harassment of adults, 1-insubordination and 2-rude to adults. Consequences included 1 10 day removal to the District Alternative Education Program (DAEP), 9 home suspensions and 6 in school suspensions. Other behaviors of concern as reported by the FACTS were: inappropriate language, tardiness, refusal to follow

directions, refusal to complete assignments, walking out of class without permission and poor attention control.

Tony was a 13 year old African American male in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade considered at risk for a special education referral. During the fall semester, he received 6 discipline referrals, 1 for fighting, 3 for threats/harassment of students and 2 for insubordination. Consequences as a result of these behavior infractions included 3 days of home suspension and 5 days of in school suspension. Other behaviors of concern as reported by teachers on the FACTS were disruption, incomplete assignments, refusal to bring class materials, distracting others in class, constant profanity and talking back.

Table 3. Student Participant Characteristics

Participant	Age	Ethnicity	Grade
Michael	13	African-American	8 <sup>th</sup>
James	11	Bi-racial (African-American & Latino)	6 <sup>th</sup>
George	13	African-American	8 <sup>th</sup>
Charles	12	Bi-racial (African-American & Latino)	7 <sup>th</sup>
Tony	13	African-American	8 <sup>th</sup>

### ***Student Selection Process***

Students were selected to participate in the study by a recommendation from school administration based on the student's referral to the campus child study team. The

district utilizes a child study team process which documents students requiring intervention based on academic and behavioral data. Students selected for this study had been referred to the child study team for tier 2 intervention due to their significant behavior problems and lack of response to tier 1 positive behavioral supports. Study selection criteria included the following: 1) at least 3 to 5 discipline referrals (ODRs) since the beginning of the current school year 2) not receiving special education services for an emotional or behavior disorder 3) not in the process of being evaluated for special education services for an emotional disturbance. After collaboration with campus administration 10, culturally diverse males were selected and ultimately 5 students elected to participate in the study.

### ***Teacher Participants***

Three teachers elected to participate in the study. Table 4 displays the demographic information for the teachers. Chapter 2's literature review identifies components of culturally responsive discourse style in teacher-student interactions. Teachers were selected for this study not only based on willingness to implement the Check-in/Check-out procedures but their ability to display a culturally responsive discourse style and participate in additional professional development focused on culturally responsive teaching. The specific discourse style exemplified by the teachers involved the following characteristics: use of familiar words and expressions, references

to popular culture, call-and-response interaction patterns, and the use of straightforward directives that have a firm communication style (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane and Hambacher, 2007). These characteristics were observed and confirmed by the researcher through classroom observations.

Teacher participant trainings focused on cultural responsiveness and self-awareness and the Check-in/Check-out procedures. Teacher participants were taught how to implement the daily Check-in/Check-out procedures using a procedural checklist. At the conclusion of the training the teachers participated in role playing the procedure for both check- in and check-out with 100% accuracy.

Table 4. Teacher Participants

Participant	Ethnicity	Gender	Certification Area	Years Teaching	Years on Campus
Ms. Gamez	Latino	Female	Science	8	8
Ms. Rocha	Latino	Female	Physical Education	17	6
Mr. Nichols	African-American	Male	Career-Tech Education	9	7

### **Dependent Variables**

Target behaviors were selected based on information provided in the FACTS for each student. Behaviors of concern ranged from classroom disruption, general noncompliance to physical aggression. Classroom disruption is defined as talking out of turn, making inappropriate noises, banging on desks, walls. Noncompliance is refusing to

follow directions or not completing an adult request within 20 seconds. Verbal aggression is defined as making derogatory remarks toward peers or adults and/or using inappropriate language. Physical aggression is defined as hitting, kicking, slapping, pinching or throwing items at anyone. Several teachers defined the students as a safety risk, however that specific idea could potentially mean different things to different teachers and was narrowed down based on specific behavior data gathered from the FACTS as well as behaviors noted in office disciplinary referrals. Table 5 identifies the specific target behaviors that were outlined on each student’s daily behavior sheet.

Table 5. Student participant target behaviors

Participant	Target Behaviors
Michael	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respectful: do not make fun of others (no verbal aggression)</li> <li>2. Complete assignments</li> <li>3. Safe-no physical aggression</li> </ol>
James	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respectful: Use appropriate language</li> <li>2. Complete assignments</li> <li>3. Safe-no physical aggression</li> </ol>
George	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respectful: Use appropriate language</li> <li>2. Complete assignments</li> <li>3. Safe-remain in class</li> </ol>
Charles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respectful: Use appropriate language</li> <li>2. Complete assignments</li> </ol>

Table 5 (continued)

	3. Safe-no physical aggression
Tony	1. Respectful: Use appropriate language (no verbal aggression) 2. Complete assignments 3. Follow directions

---

**Independent Variable: Culturally Responsive Check-in/Check-out**

The independent variable is a culturally responsive discourse style added to a researched based intervention. This discourse style has the specific following characteristics: an active direct approach, use of familiar words and expressions, call-and-response interaction patterns and use of straightforward directives that have a firm communication style. The culturally responsive discourse style is added to the Check-in/Check-out as an additional component implemented by the teacher participants. Specifically this communicative style involves the use of verbal style more direct in nature. For example, interactions that require a specific directive is not formed as a suggestion but in a direct manner. The modification of the facilitator and student interaction in a culturally responsive mode is intended to increase the effectiveness of the Check-in/Check-out intervention for African-American males.

## **Experimental Design**

To examine the effects of this culturally responsive Check-in/Check-out intervention on problem behavior the study used a non-concurrent multiple baseline across subjects design. Non-concurrent multiple baseline design allows the researcher to compare the effect of an intervention at various points in time across participants. Watson and Workman (1981) postulate that the rationale of this particular design is that even though data observations are not completed concurrently the changes in the behavior during intervention are related to the treatment variable since they occurred in conjunction with treatment procedures that were implemented at predetermined points in time. An advantage of this procedure is that it allows researcher's flexibility in the assignment to intervention as it naturally occurs, in particular, schools. Students were referred through the course of the semester and not ruled out for the intervention based on timing. By staggering the initiation of the intervention, it was possible to determine a relation between the independent and dependent variables while controlling for confounding variables (Kazdin, 1982). This design allowed for stability across baseline to determine possible effectiveness of the intervention with the first participant before giving other participants the intervention. Furthermore, nonconcurrent multiple baseline design allowed students to be added for intervention as they met inclusion criteria of accruing office discipline referrals (ODRs) and unresponsiveness to tier 1 activities.

Internal and external threats to validity were controlled through the nonconcurrent multiple baseline design. Internal validity refers to the extent to which the independent

variable impacts the dependent variable (Kennedy, 2005). Attrition and selection bias are anticipated threats to the internal validity of this study. However, the number of students selected was ample to address this concern. Selection bias was addressed through the inclusion criteria of the participants. Office referrals used for determining the inclusion criteria were written by any adult on staff and not just teacher participants in the study.

External validity is defined as the extent to which the intervention is generalizable to multiple populations and environments (Kennedy, 2005). The Check-in/Check-out intervention has been implemented with students in elementary and secondary settings and across racial and ethnic groups. Because the purpose of this study was to identify its success with African American students at a middle school level this study will address generality across subjects as the study extends to the application of a culturally responsive Check-in/Check-out intervention.

### ***Baseline***

Baseline data were collected for each student participant by their classroom teachers completing a daily rating for each student for 5 days. These daily ratings were based on the point system that was ultimately utilized during the intervention phase and had the following rating system: 0- dismissed from the class with an ODR, 1-overall good but some warning given, 2-good behavior, no warnings.



### ***Intervention***

Check-in/Check-out was implemented daily using the following procedures: First, the students met individually with their teacher prior to the first period of the day to review behavior goals and to receive their daily point sheet. The point sheet provided a visual representation of the student's daily schedule and a place for the teachers to rate student's by class period. Second, each student took their point sheets from class to class and gave them to their teachers at the beginning of the class period. Feedback was provided from the teacher indicating whether the student scored a 0, 1, or 2 for that class period. A score of 0 indicated that the student was dismissed from the class with an ODR. A score of 1 indicated that the student's behavior was overall good but may have received warnings about their behavior. Third, prior to the end of school each day the student met with their Check-in/Check-out teacher to discuss behavior for the entire day and points received. Students received positive feedback for scores of 2 and the facilitators addressed behavior strategies for scores of 0 to 1 to improve behavior for the next school day. Fourth, students were prompted to take the point charts home and discuss them with their parent/guardian. Fifth, the students were instructed to return the point sheet to their teacher during check in the following school morning.

### ***Data Collection***

Data were collected on office discipline referrals and points earned from the daily behavior point sheets. There were 4 class periods per day and 1 class period of advisory.

The maximum number of points a student could receive per class period would be 6 points and 24 points for the day.

Teacher participants completed a social validity survey at the conclusion of the study. The survey was provided electronically through a google form. It contained 6 questions (see Appendix G). Questions aimed to determine their view of the effectiveness and practicality of the intervention. The survey consisted of 6 questions on a Likert-scale ranging from 5 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study. Outcomes are summarized per student by examining the percent of daily points earned and office discipline referrals (ODRs).

### *Student participant results*

Results for participant Michael are listed below in Figure 1 which displays the percentage of points earned during baseline and the intervention phase. Target behaviors noted on the student's point sheet included: being respectful specifically not making fun of others, responsible: completing assignments and maintaining safe behavior. Baseline data collected shows that the student earned an average of 62% of daily points possible. During the first week of the intervention phase the student's percent of points earned decreased to 46%. Michael began to make steady progress during week 3 with 69% of daily points earned. Progress continued throughout the intervention and a total of 88% of daily points were earned during the last week of the intervention phase.

Figure 2 summarizes the results of Michael's ODRs. During baseline the student received 2 ODRs. Both discipline referrals were for class disruption and one referral combined class disruption and insubordination. The teacher noted that Michael refused to remain quiet and also refused to leave the class when first asked. In the first week of intervention, Michael earned 2 more discipline referrals from the same teacher both for class disruption. The student also earned a referral during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the intervention

phase for failure to serve a detention. For the duration of the intervention, the student did not earn any additional ODRs.

Examination of Michael’s results show that there was an overall increase of appropriate behavior and decrease in noncompliance throughout the intervention phase. A review of the data sheets showed that the student was earning full points for maintaining safe behavior and completing assignments. However reports showed that he continued to receive warnings for not “being respectful.”

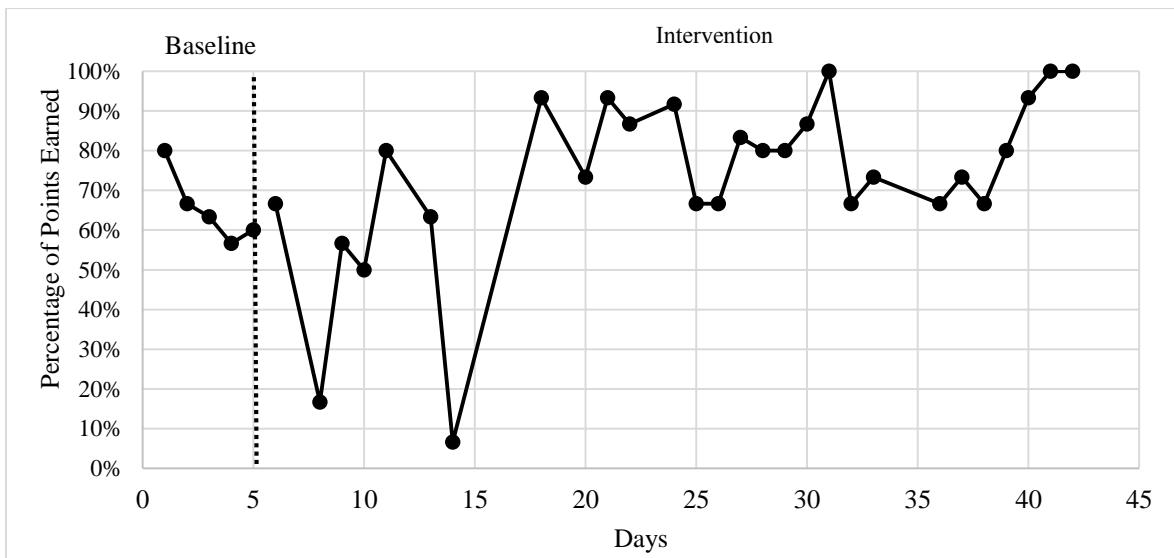


Figure 1: Michael Percentage of points earned

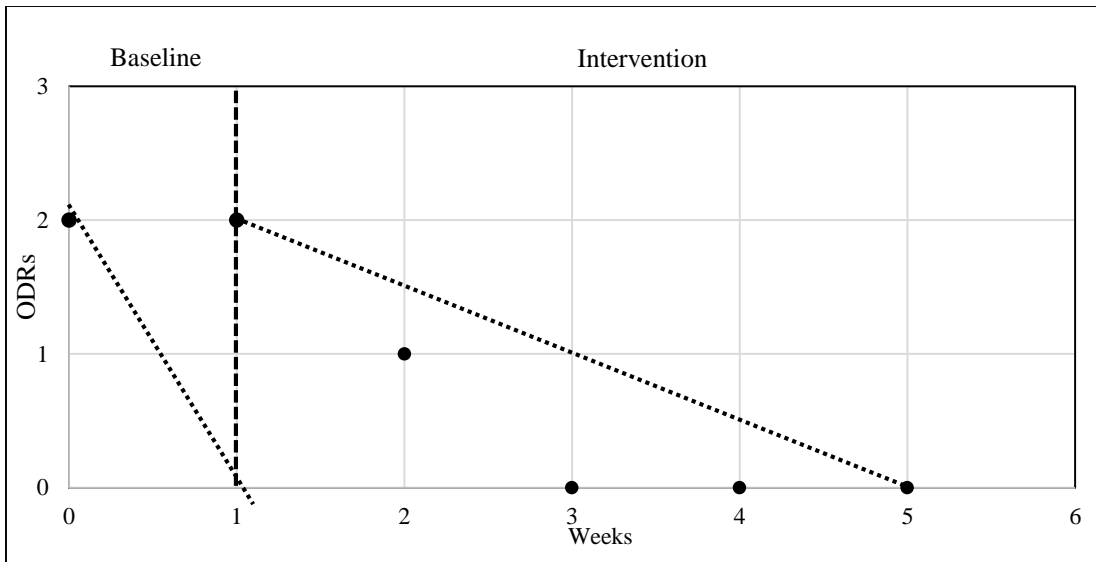


Figure 2: Michael ODRs

Percentage of daily points earned is presented in Figure 3 for James. Target behaviors noted on the student's point sheet included using appropriate language, completing assignments and maintaining safe behavior. Baseline data collected shows that the student earned an average of 63% of daily points possible. The student made steady progress throughout the intervention to 87% of points earned during the last week of intervention.

Figure 4 summarizes the student's ODRs. During baseline James did not earn any ODRs. However, during week 1 and week 2, the student earned ODRs for insubordination-refusal to follow directions. Both referrals were given by the same teacher specifically citing that James would not refrain from using inappropriate language

and talking during direct instructional time. For the remainder of the intervention phase the student did not earn any additional ODRs.

An overall examination of data shows an increase in compliant behaviors for James. The student maintained an average of 85% and above in his last 3 weeks of intervention. Specifically, the student was able to make progress on completing assignments and maintaining safe behavior. The student continued to receive almost daily warnings from some teachers on using appropriate language. Teacher reports noted that when James was working in groups or independently he would often curse or make off topic conversation that the teacher deemed as inappropriate.

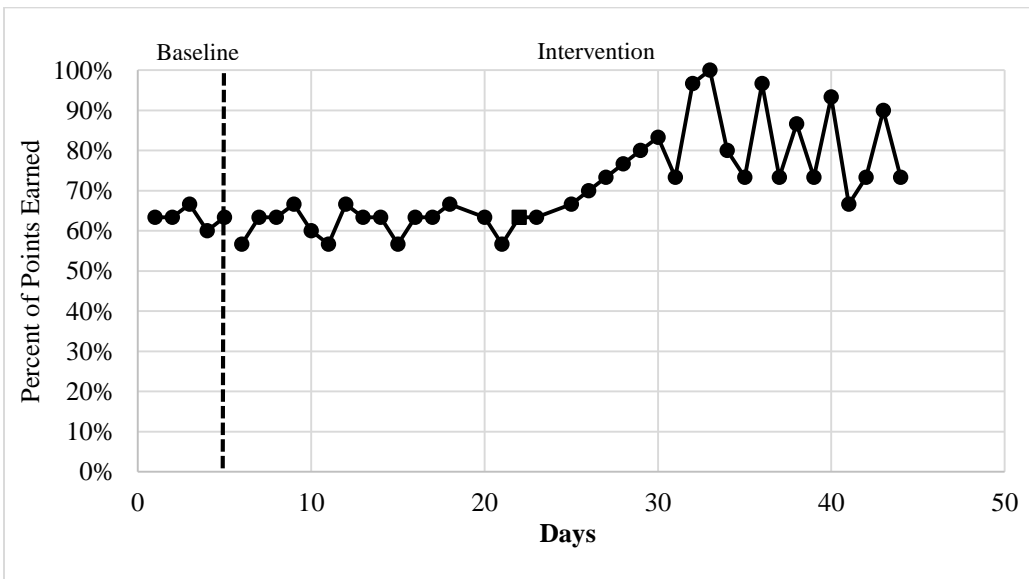


Figure 3: James Percentage of points earned

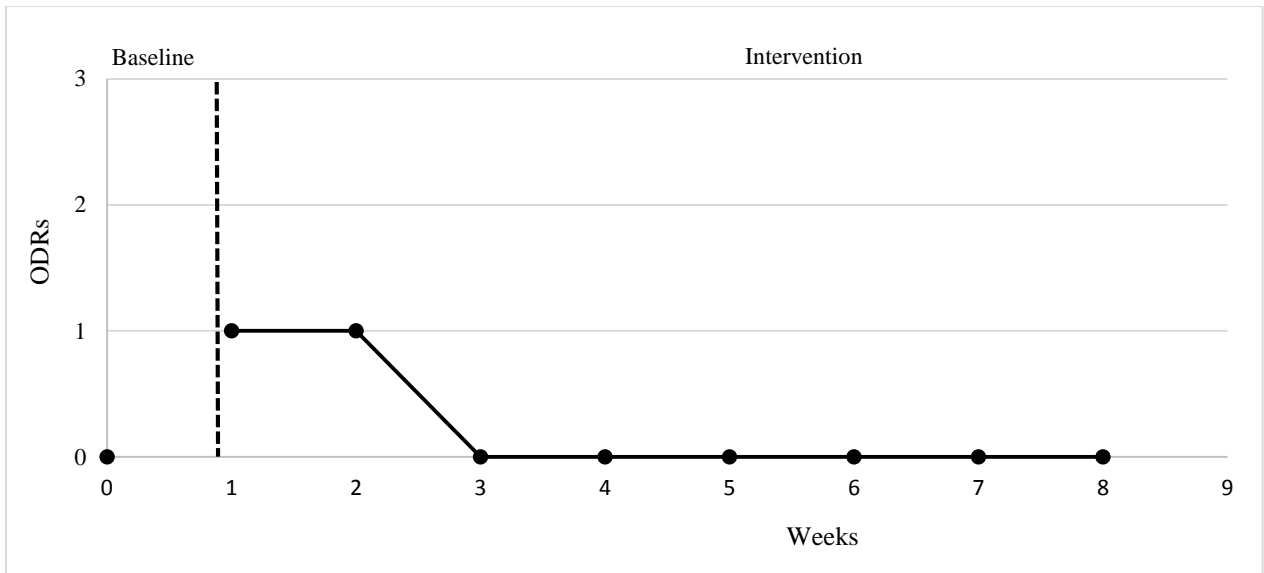


Figure 4: James ODRs

Results for percentage of daily points earned for participant Charles is listed below in Figure 5. Target behaviors noted for the student included: respectful, responsible and safe. Baseline data collected shows that the student earned an average of 47% of daily points possible. During the first week of the intervention phase the student’s percent of points earned remained constant at 47%. Progress for Charles continued and the student made progress during the last week of intervention earning 71% of daily points.

A summary of ODRs for Charles is presented in Figure 6. Data collected during baseline showed that Charles earned 2 ODRs. One ODR for physical aggression during lunchtime for a “pushing match” with another student which resulted in an afternoon of in-school suspension. The next ODR he received that week was for insubordination which resulted from a refusal to stop in the hallway when addressed by an administrator,

he was suspected of not going in the direction of his assigned class. During the first week of intervention he received an ODR for classroom disruption, specifically it was noted that he would not stop talking and using inappropriate language. There were no referrals during weeks 2, 3 or 4, however he did receive an ODR during week 5 for classroom disruption and insubordination, refusal to remain in the classroom as instructed.

An overall analysis of the intervention for this student shows a moderate improvement in behavior. Charles was viewed as one of the most challenging students on campus. Both teachers and administrators reported that he was consistently in the hallway during class time and could be extremely disrespectful and aggressive. During the intervention phase, data collected indicates there was intermittent progress with regard to maintaining safe behavior and being responsible, specifically completing classroom assignments. However, the student continued to need daily warnings in class to decrease disruptive behavior (being respectful) but behavior that had previously escalated to removal decreased.

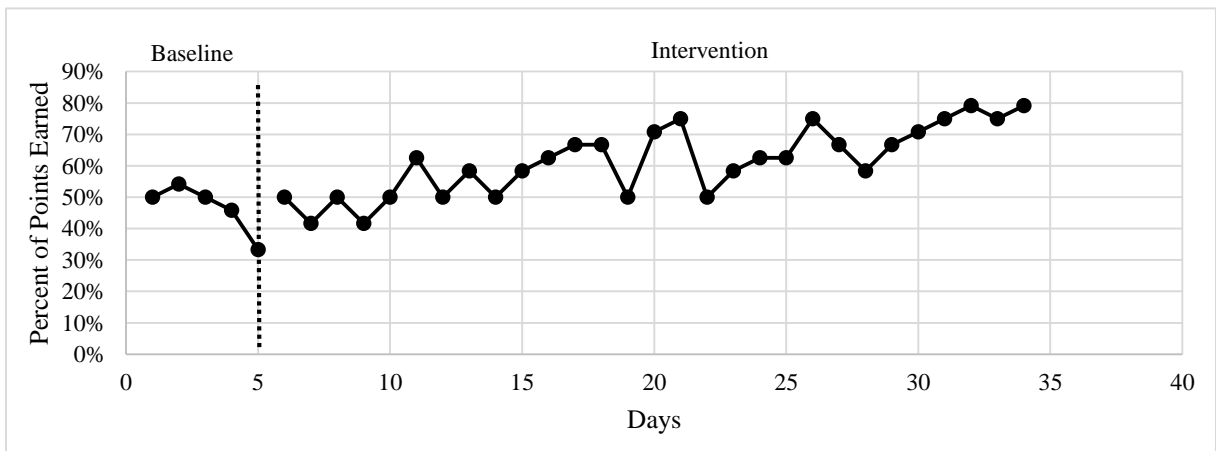


Figure 5: Charles percentage of points earned



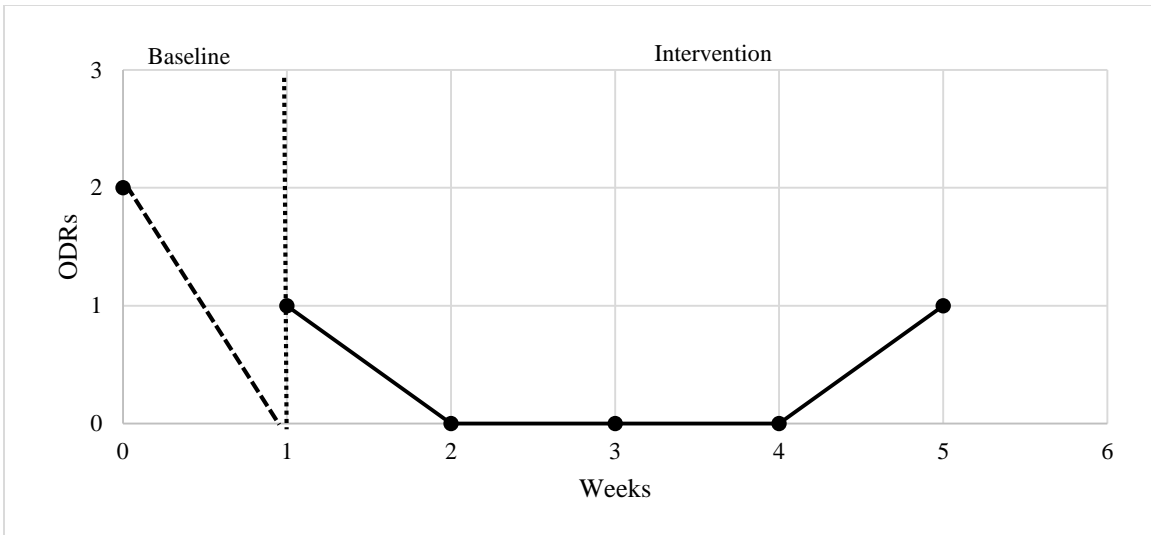


Figure 6: Charles ODRs

Results for George are listed below in Figure 7. Target behaviors included responsibility, specifically bringing materials to class, completing assignments and remaining in the classroom. George could earn a total of 30 points for the day. Baseline data shows that the student earned an average of 52% of daily points possible. In the first week of intervention the percent of points decreased to 47%. However, the student’s progress increased during week 3 to 77% of points earned and steady grew to 80% of daily points earned during the last week of intervention.

Figure 8 summarizes George’s results for ODRs. During baseline, the student earned 2 ODRs, one for class disruption and one for skipping class and attending an unassigned lunch period. In week 1 of the intervention, he earned another ODR for class disruption, specifically the teacher noted that he “became angry and disrupted class by

cursing loudly and hitting the wall as he left the room.” Week 2 of the intervention George received another referral for skipping class and again attending the wrong lunch. Throughout the rest of the intervention, the student did not get any additional ODRs.

Examination of George’s results show steady progress throughout the intervention phase. Although the student’s percentage of points remained moderate, in a review of data the student was able to increase the frequency in which he brought materials to class and completing assignments. Though, George continued to receive almost daily warnings for being tardy and repeatedly requesting to leave the classroom during certain class periods.

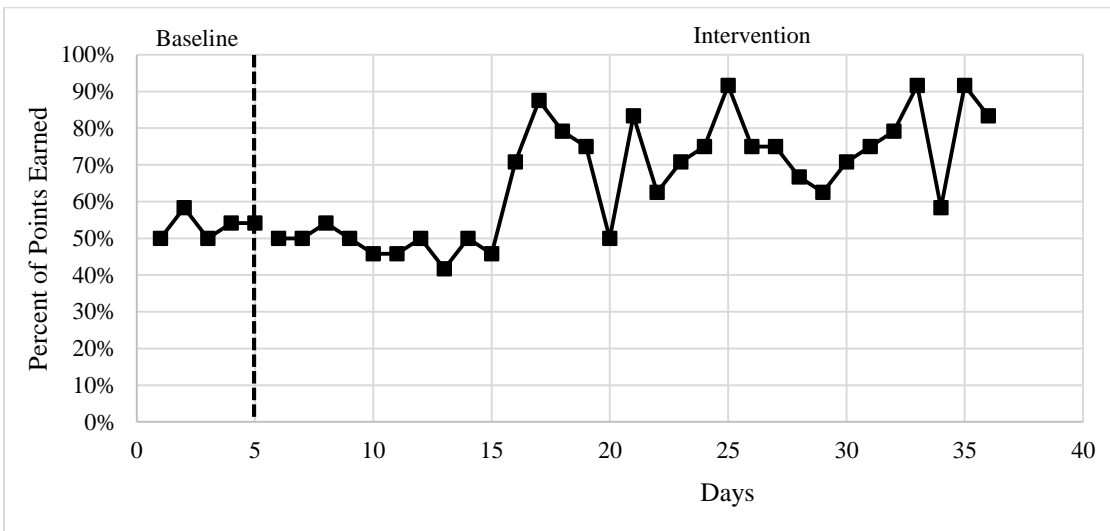


Figure 7: George percent of point earned

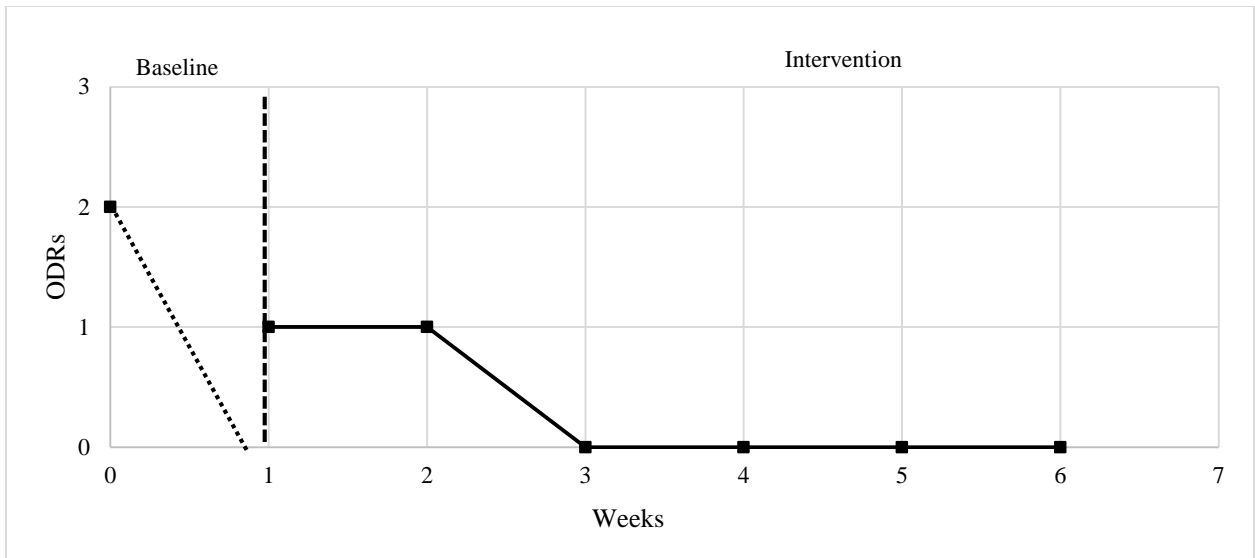


Figure 8: George ODRs

Figure 9 displays the percent of daily points earned for participant Tony. Target behaviors noted on the student’s point sheet included: being respectful specifically not making fun of others, responsible: completing assignments and maintaining safe behavior. Baseline data collected shows that the student earned only an average of 45% of daily points possible. In the first week of intervention the student’s percent of points earned increased to 58%. Sixty-nine percent was the highest average of percentage points earned during week 3. Intermittent progress continued through the last week of intervention to an average of 59% of daily points earned.

Figure 10 displays data collected regarding the student’s number of ODRs. During the baseline period Tony did not earn any office discipline referrals. However the student did earn one referral during week 1 of the intervention phase for insubordination

and classroom disruption. Also, in week 2 he earned an ODR for verbal aggression towards another student. Tony also received an ODR for insubordination during week 4 of the intervention phase for refusing to turn off his cell phone and walking out of class.

An overall examination of results for Tony revealed that moderate progress was made for this intervention. His weekly percentage remained fairly low with the student never receiving more than 80% of points earned. Disaggregating the daily point sheets show that during baseline Tony was receiving warnings about his behavior in 3 of 4 classes daily to either complete assignments and/or follow directions. During the intervention phase this decreased to warnings in approximately 2 out of 4 classes daily. Data reviewed showed that Tony continued to have difficulty with peer interactions and frequently was removed from the classroom to stand in the hallway due to classroom disruptions or refusal to follow directions.

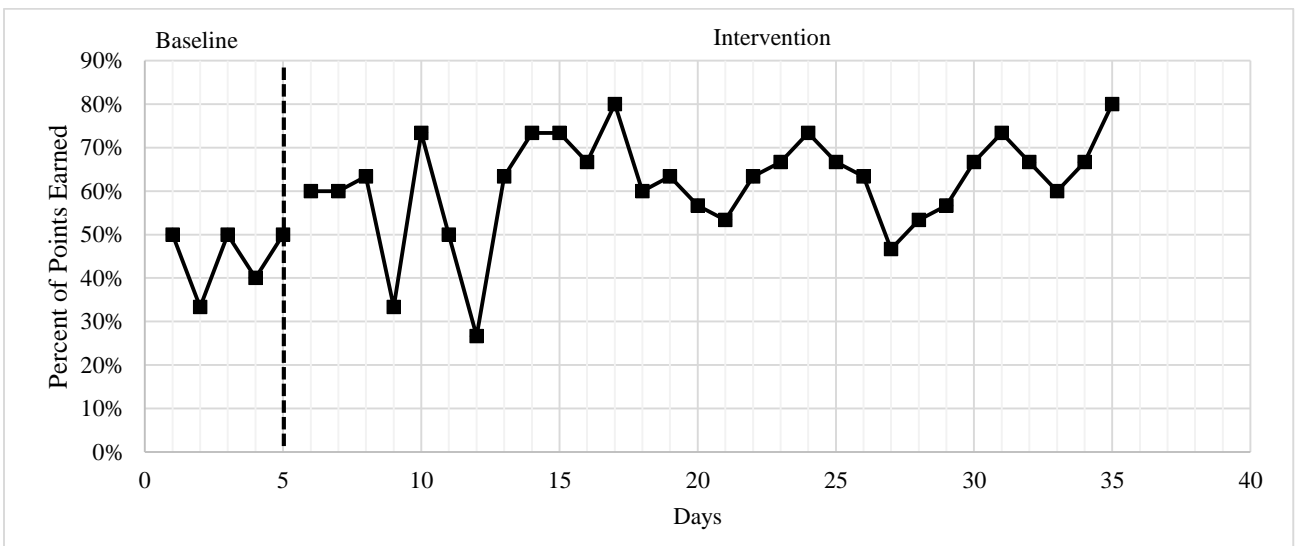


Figure 9: Tony percentage of points earned

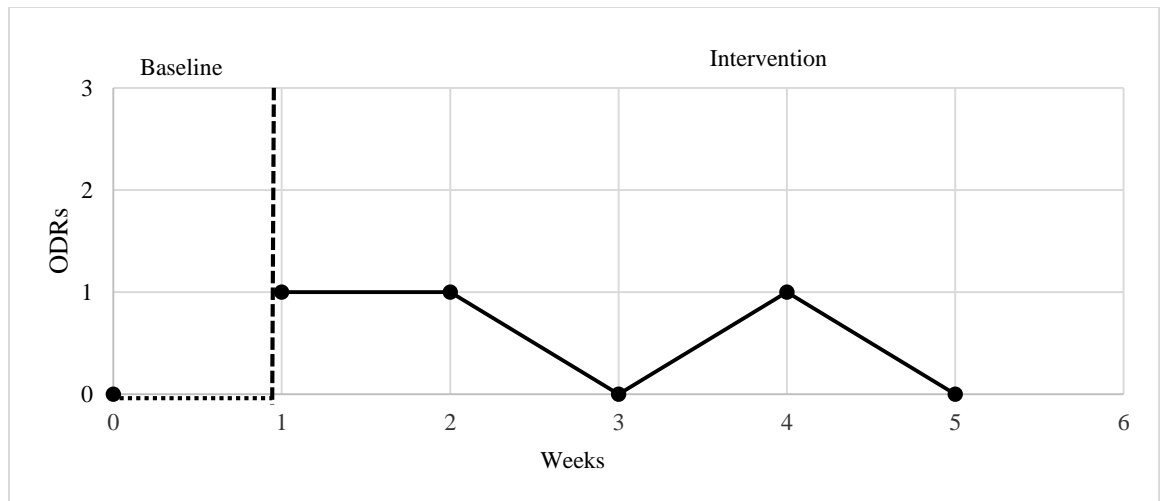


Figure 10: Tony ODRs

Examination of the intervention on the participants yielded an overall positive result. Trend lines for all participants show an overall increase in percentage of points earned from daily classroom behavior. The percentage of daily points earned was highest for participant George who made an increase of 28% of points earned. Michael and James also saw an improvement from baseline to the last week of intervention with an increase of 26% and 24% correspondingly. Both Charles and Tony made smaller gains of 4% and 12%, respectively.

As measured by ODRs, improvement was moderate for all students. Participants, James, George and Charles all received 2 ODRs during the intervention phase of the study. However, James and George received ODRs during the first 2 weeks of the intervention phase and continued to make behavior progress throughout the entire

intervention period. Charles obtained an ODR during the first and last week of the intervention. Both Michael and Tony received 3 ODRs during the intervention. Tony did not earn an ODR during baseline however received discipline referrals during weeks 1, 2 and 4. While Michael received 2 referrals in week 1 of the intervention phase and 1 ODR in week 2 for failure to serve detention from the previous week.

### ***Teacher participant results***

Teacher participants completed a social validity survey at the conclusion of the study. The survey aimed to determine their view of the effectiveness and the feasibility of the intervention. The survey consisted of 6 questions on a Likert-scale ranging from 5 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree. When asked whether or not the overall Check-in/Check-out procedures were effective the mean score was 4.3 out of the 5 point scale. Question 5 asked whether or not the procedure was easy to implement had the highest mean score with 4.7. The lowest score was on question 2 which asked whether or not they understood the universal supports that were available on the campus. Overall results show positive responses from the teacher participants in rating the effectiveness and ability to implement the Check-in/Check-out intervention. The last question aimed to assess whether or not the participants felt comfortable in general implementing culturally responsive strategies for students with behavior challenges. Mean response was 4.7. A summary of the results are listed below in Table 6.

Table 6. Teacher Participant Social Validity Results

Question	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Mean
1. Overall, I believe Check-in/Check-out has been critical for supporting the behavior of some of my students with challenging behavior.	4	5	4	4.3
2. I understand the universal supports for the students on this campus and have taught specific behavior expectations to my students.	3	5	3	3.7
3. I feel I have received enough information on Check-in/Check-out and the key components to be successful.	4	5	4	4.3
4. I feel that the principles of Check-in/Check-out fit the current campus structures.	4	5	4	4.3
5. I feel the key supports that Check-in/Check-out encompasses [e.g., pre-corrects, encouraging appropriate behavior, consistent consequences] are feasible to implement.	5	5	4	4.7
6. I feel comfortable using culturally responsive strategies for encouraging behavior expectations	5	5	4	4.7

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to identify if when a culturally responsive discourse style was added to the research-based Check-in/Check-out intervention it would increase its effectiveness for African American males with problematic behavior. The rationale of this study was to contribute to the research on specific tier 2 interventions that could be successful for African-American students at risk for an inappropriate referral to special education, repeated classroom/school removal and the likelihood of increased contact with the juvenile justice system. Towards this purpose, a nonconcurrent multiple baseline study was implemented with 5 students. This chapter will address the results of this study, implications for research and practice as well as limitations are presented.

To assess the effectiveness of the intervention, Data were collected on office discipline referrals and points received on a daily Check-in/Check-out monitoring form. Results showed that for all 5 participants there was an increase of points earned from baseline through the last week of intervention. The mean percent increase was 19%, with 3 of 5 participants averaging a percent increase of over 24%.

Results for receipt of office discipline referrals (ODRs) were moderate. All participants managed to receive referrals at some point during the intervention, however upon review of the data, 3 of the 5 participants received all of their referrals during the first 2 weeks of the intervention. Two participants, Charles and Tony received ODRs during the latter part of the intervention; still these 2 students made moderate progress in the intervention phase overall but continued to have some challenges in one particular



class period. Upon a review of discipline referrals, daily point sheets and anecdotal records, it was revealed that both Michael and Tony received discipline referrals from the same teacher for the same infraction, class disruption. Overall the results are promising for all participants with a decrease in problematic behavior during the intervention phase.

## **Implications**

This study expands the literature in the following ways 1) contributes to the information regarding tier 2 interventions within the SWPBS model 2) identifies an effective intervention specifically for African American males 3) supports the literature on cultural responsiveness by extending the data on strategies that work with African American students at the middle level.

### ***Implications for practice***

Within the SWPBS framework, the use of tier 2 interventions serve to identify students not responding to school wide expectations by increasing the level of support. Check-in/Check-out behavior intervention has been shown to decrease problematic behavior in students displaying consistent inappropriate behavior. Promising results from this research continues to add to the information regarding the positive uses of the Check-in/Check-out tier 2 intervention. Results from the social validity survey support previous research that shows teachers view this as an effective intervention. Respondents reported that it was easy to use and adapt to meet the needs of diverse students. Integrating the

necessary training for implementation as well as adding activities which highlighted the role of culturally responsiveness makes this intervention very encouraging for diverse groups. SWPBS has the potential to eliminate the discipline disparity that exists for African American students (Tobin & Vincent, 2011). The multi-tiered system provides a mechanism to support students at an individual level while using positive behavioral strategies for the entire campus.

Without intervention, outcomes for African American males continues to be bleak. Recent data from U.S. Office of Civil Rights report disproportionately high suspension rates for minority students. African American students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students; on average 5% of white students are suspended, compared to 16% of African American students (U.S. Office of Civil Rights, 2014). Repeated suspensions and placements at alternative education programs are punitive measures consistently used over-utilized for African American students. These reactive procedures are linked to poor outcomes for students which include academic failure, retention and dropout (Flannery, Fenning, McGrath, McIntosh, 2011). Texas data shows that over 60% of students were suspended for disciplinary actions and African American students are 31% more likely to receive discretionary disciplinary results compared to their percentage in the overall student population (Texas Appleseed, 2007). In 2009, the Council of State Government Justice Center was commissioned to study the discipline practices of Texas public schools and found that approximately, 10 percent of students suspended or expelled between seventh and twelfth grade dropped out and that 59 percent of those students disciplined 11 times or more did

not graduate from high school during the study period (Council of State Government Justice Center, 2011, pg.56). Students who are repeatedly disciplined, are more likely to be retained or to drop out than are students not involved in the disciplinary system. According to Texas statute, a student cannot be suspended for more than 3 days at a time, however there is no limit to the number of 3 day suspensions allowed in a school year. Therefore, students who are repeatedly suspended or disciplined outside of the classroom, frequently lose a significant amount of instructional time. Students who are often in classes that are not culturally competent and are consistently disengaged are at a higher risk for not making academic gains sufficient in comparison to their peers. Texas data reports that of all students who were suspended or expelled 31 percent repeated their grade at least once (Council of State Government Justice Center, 2011). In contrast, only 5 percent of students with no disciplinary involvement were held back.

There is an abundance of literature which confirms that when a student is repeatedly earning discipline referrals that result in frequent suspensions it triples the likelihood of contact with the juvenile justice system. Texas data shows that more than one in seven students was in contact with the juvenile justice system at least once between seventh and twelfth grade (Council of State Government Justice Center, 2011). Data regarding public school disciplinary practices in Texas show that of the 928,940 children studied, nearly 15 percent had juvenile justice system contact. Using a multivariate analysis the research reported that when a student was suspended for a discretionary school disciplinary violation, this resulted in a 2.85 times the likelihood of juvenile justice contact within the next school year (Council of State Government Justice

Center, 2011, p. 23) For African-American students, 25.6% had more involvement in the juvenile justice system than 22% of Latino students or white male students (13.9%).

Educators must provide early effective supports to prevent repeated disciplinary involvement that increases a student's chances of making contact with the juvenile justice system. Effective SWPBS include not only the teaching of school wide behavior, consistent rewards and consequences but systematic procedures must be in place to assist students not responding to tier 1 implementation.

Schools can change their programs and culture to create an environment for African Americans by using strategies that essentially communicate the expectation that all students can succeed and provide them with the parameters to do so. It is necessary for educational leadership to foster the development of teachers so that they can increase their behavior management skills. Teachers that understand the relationship between culture and their behavior management styles and instructional techniques will experience improvement and an increase in achievement for students of color. Racial and cultural differences are oftentimes so evident in the definitions of compliant behavior, and this leads to inequitable punishment of African American students by school personnel who do not respect their style of classroom participation or understand their behavior. Teachers must be able to exemplify effective management strategies and connections with students that incorporate self-control strategies and use multi-tiered levels of support. Tiered levels of support should include criterion-based achievement objectives with regular progress monitoring. All students, but particularly African American males must be evaluated for their strengths, not their weaknesses. Education in

the social dimensions in which schools exist must pay attention to the nuanced cultural interactions and characteristics of students in order to increase student engagement and decrease negative reactions to misunderstood behaviors. Educational leadership must consider an attempt to increase the number of African American teachers and provide professional development for all staff, irrespective of race, on cross cultural communication skills and teaching strategies. Results of this study provide concrete data that show how the use of a particular communication style can make a difference in outcomes for African-American males and extending the concept of this to other tiered interventions will increase the likelihood of the success.

This investigation builds upon research about adolescents' experiences in school. It broadens the research that reports that when a positive connection develops between students and teachers, African American students are more likely to experience academic/behavioral success (McHugh, Horner, Colditz & Wallace, 2013; Milner, 2011; Ozer, Wolf, Kong 2008; Ware, 2006; Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Osterman, 2000). Adolescents have consistently self-reported that among other elements, treatment by teachers is a significant factor towards school success (Ozer, Wolf, Kong, 2008). Because the Check-in/Check-out intervention builds upon this concept this study provides promising data that connects how interpersonal relationships, culturally responsive communication style can intersect with a researched based intervention. The addition of a culturally responsive discourse style to the Check-in/Check-out program provides promising data on a specific intervention that can have a positive effect on an African American student at the middle level experiencing problematic behavior.

Implications of this study confirms the importance of appropriate teacher training. Culturally responsive techniques and interventions can be used so frequently in general terms as a solution to educational disparities for minority students. However, results of this investigation provide preservice programs with a concrete model on how to intervene on African American males with problematic classroom behavior. Understanding the role of race and culture as it pertains to learning and behavior management has a significant impact on the training of preservice teachers. Researchers Adams Hill and Flores (2014) successfully modeled a SWPBS program to preservice teachers with positive results. Positive results included increased accountability, increased understanding of the PBIS characteristics and interventions, and created a positive teaching environment (Adams Hill & Flores, 2014 p. 100). It is necessary to provide novice teachers with as much understanding of behavior and culture as schools become more diverse.

### ***Implication for Research***

The understanding of research as a cultural practice provides an important implication to this research study. Although quality indicators have been expounded about the appropriate techniques and approaches for conducting investigations, the importance of cultural context when designing and implementing research with students of color cannot be overlooked (Rogoff, 2003). Research protocols such as behavior checklist and observation forms do not lack meaning to the investigator. This study exemplifies the investigators assumptions, values and expectations based on personal

experience rooted in the cultural community being studied. The ability of the investigator to understand and interpret the interactions of the adult facilitator, based on knowledge of the nuanced cultural expression provides a lens that is culturally responsive to the entire study. Goodnow (2002) identified how the research team being connected to the group being studied should be considered. Intervention studies aimed at particular ethnic groups may be difficult to navigate for outsiders and make recruitment and data collection difficult, however due to the researcher's ability to navigate the teacher participant selection, the intervention was not as difficult to navigate as it could be from a traditional outsider's point of view.

Gaps in the current research for tier 2 interventions reveal a lack of data specifically addressing African American students as well as the general lack of comparable results for culturally diverse populations. In the literature on Check-in/Check-out this demographic has had inconsistent, minimal representation. In order to improve outcomes with regard to disparate discipline practices, it is imperative to improve interventions aimed at addressing students of color displaying problem behavior. Therefore research must focus on not only what tiered interventions show promise but have positive outcomes for student populations affected by disproportionate reactionary discipline practices. Early studies by Crone and Horner, (2003) and March and Horner (2002) report that use of the Check-in/Check-out program within the SWPBS model resulted in reductions of office discipline referrals and overall problem behaviors, however participant demographic information was scarcely collected. Types of descriptions used in these early studies were "ethnic minorities" and "nonwhite". Studies

by Hawken, O'Neill and MacLeod (2011), Hawken, MacLeod and Rawlings (2007) and Filter, McKenna, Benedict, Horner, Todd and Watson (2007) aimed to also report on the use of the Check-in/Check-out intervention but have limitedly reported results precisely for African American students. As described in chapter 2, a majority of the studies which had a larger representation of African American students took place at the elementary level (Vincent, Tobin, Hawken & Frank, 2012). Researchers (Vincent, Tobin, Hawken & Frank (2012) and Simonsen, Myers & Briere (2011) used a control group design which did not provide the ability to disaggregate and identify the nuances of the intervention that can support African American males at the middle level experiencing behavioral difficulties. Based on the results of this inquiry it reinforces the need of SWPBS programs to use quality tier 2 interventions based on student characteristics. It is imperative to review the current behavioral interventions provided for students not responding to universal efforts and extrapolate which interventions have been effective for diverse populations. Check-in/Check-out has been used frequently, however breaking down the components of the intervention to determine what aspects are successful for diverse populations can increase the likelihood of success with varying student groups.

Researchers (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994; 2001; Weiner, 1999) in the field of culturally responsiveness have provided educators with strategies for addressing the needs of a diverse population of students. The significance of this study is to respond to the common response of what does culturally responsive look like in practice. Strategies include sharing familiar communication styles, use of straight forward directives, making connections through popular culture and the



use of humor (Ware, 2006). However, primarily studies have been qualitative in nature and particularly focused on whole classroom management strategies. Furthermore, they have not been extensively examined in the SWPBS context. There are a limited number of studies within the SWPBS model that have used the strategies exemplified in the research on cultural responsiveness. When you consider the magnitude of studies which emphasize student-teacher relationships and culturally responsive instruction, this process of utilizing a particular culturally responsive technique and integrating it with a current tier 2 intervention, extends the research in this area. Sugai, O'Keefe and Fallon (2012) discuss the need for cultural considerations in a SWPBS model for students of diverse backgrounds in order to increase the likelihood of success for minority populations. They report that in order to create a SWPBS program that can increase appropriate behaviors for students at risk, it is imperative to have culturally responsive tiered interventions for students as necessary. Studies, such as Tsai and Cheney (2012) and Anderson, Christenson, Sinclair, and Lehr (2004) that explored the role of the adult-child relationship in a similar type of tier 2 intervention included participants who were primarily Caucasian. Therefore the methodology of this intervention study served not only to add to the literature about the use of a tier 2 behavior intervention but to specifically focus on using a strategy that integrated the use of culturally responsive techniques.

### ***Future research***

This study has sought to increase the research base on effective interventions for African American males and the use of culturally responsive communication on a behavioral intervention. However, future research should consider increasing the number and gender of participants, replicating in rural and urban areas and digging deeper into the school typology to determine the precise features that can increase the effectiveness of the intervention.

Although the findings of this study provided supported evidence of its effectiveness it should be replicated in both elementary and secondary settings in urban and rural areas. Although there have been studies at the elementary level on the benefits of the Check-in/Check-out intervention there have been no studies that have implemented this type of cultural component. Future studies should build upon previous research conducted in elementary schools that have shown the effectiveness with a wider range of elementary students in various settings across the country. For instance the use of the intervention in a rural area may provide additional insight into the components of the student-teacher interactions. Research by Hadre, Sullivan and Roberts (2008) revealed that in rural areas teachers have more chances to influence students because they often live in the same area and are familiar with students' families. As a result, teacher interactions may be more socially important for rural youth than urban students and may have a profound effect on the implementation and results of the intervention due to its reliance on adult interactions. Utilizing both urban and rural settings will provide a cross

section of data on the effectiveness with African American students in different regions. Regional outcomes contribute to knowledge of feasibility and acceptability of cultural adaptations. In a study of overrepresentation of minority students in disciplinary programs in Texas, Tajalli and Garba (2014) determined that although the overrepresentation of African American students in disciplinary programs is significantly higher in urban school districts than in rural districts, African American students are still overrepresented in their alternative discipline placements.

Future research should also carefully consider the fidelity in which the SWPBS program is being implemented. Results of the social validity survey indicated a low rating related to the question about understanding the universal behavior supports on campus. Although only the teacher participants responded to the survey future research should determine the rate to which all teachers understand and are implementing all universal supports and what affect if any may that have on the implementation of a tier 2 culturally responsive behavior intervention. Fallon and colleagues (2014) investigated the fidelity in which schools implementing school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS). The researchers revealed the level of consistency with which classroom-based SWPBS practices were implemented and discussed the need to document the challenges faced by school personnel, to ensure the best possible behavioral and academic outcomes for students. Using survey research, the results indicated although classroom-based SWPBS practices were implemented very consistently by the majority of the teacher respondents, certain facets were challenging to implement. The researchers reported that teachers seemed to have more challenges managing disruptive behavior consistent with school-

wide practice. Similarly, McIntosh and colleagues (2014) utilized *School-Wide Universal Behavior Sustainability Index: School Teams* which is an instrument designed to assess the features that relate to the sustainability of universal behavior support interventions. The researchers found that the effect of SWPBS on student outcomes has been shown to be facilitated by its fidelity with higher implementing schools seeing better student outcomes (McIntosh, Predy, Upreti, Hume, Turri & Mathews, 2014). If there is a lack of fidelity with the application of the school wide expectations and reward system, there may be a distinct impact on the ability for school staff to implement the tier 2 intervention. The intervention continues relies on the entire campus operating within the SWPBS model. Future investigations should employ the use of a similar techniques to determine the level of implementation of school wide practices in order to ascertain its effects on the tier 2 intervention.

Consideration of overall school demographics and type may also provide additional data on the level of implementation of the intervention. Although several studies have explored school type it has been in a direct relationship to disciplinary practices (Noltemeyer & Mcloughlin, 2010) such as the research by Tajalli and Garba (2014) which found that the disparate discipline practice was in a direct relationship to what the researchers considered the ‘whiteness’ of school (Tajalli, H. & Garba, 2014 p. 628). Widening the scope of schools will allow for the identification of characteristics such as whiteness of a school, experience level of the teachers, perceptions of the SWPBS and the intervention and role of culturally responsiveness will provide a richer

context in which to make the results of the study applicable. Investigations should include outcomes in relationship to various school characteristics can extend the research in this area.

Replication should also consider the use of not only teachers as facilitators but other professional staff. A study by Tsai and Cheney (2012) compared the use of behavior “coaches” as well as teacher facilitators in the use of the Check-in/Check-out intervention. Likewise Cheney and others (Cheney, Lynass, Flower, Waugh, Iwaszuk, Mielenz, Hawken, 2010) mention the use of paraprofessionals as an option that might be more cost-effective. Broadening the adults who can facilitate this intervention and considering the use of paraprofessionals may also increase the ability of a campus to serve more students. However, additional studies solely using paraprofessionals in this role should be explored.

An increase in sample size that includes both female and male participants should be included in future research at both elementary and secondary schools. This particular study was very specific to African American males in an urban middle school. The US Department of Education reports that nationally, 11 % of African American girls have been suspended out of school compared to only 7 % of White boys and 3 % of White girls (US Dept of Education, 2014). With an increase of African American female students with disciplinary issues, the replication of this study with girls can be a promising next step. Researchers (Blake, Butler, Lewis, Darensbourg, 2011) explored discipline outcomes for African American female students and found that although they were not seen as much as a threat as African American males, they were more likely

suspended and seen as aggressive, defiant and disrespectful than their white counterparts. Their study showed that disobedience was the most common disciplinary infraction. Disobedience falls into that category of being subjective and relies on the perception of the teacher. Expanding this research to include African American girls at both elementary and secondary schools can increase the knowledge base of this intervention.

Future research may also include a measurement of academic success. Although many of the student's daily goals involved completing assignments, Data were not specifically collected on grades or any type of measurement of academic progress. It has been proposed that when teachers use culturally response techniques whether they be behavioral or instructional, students will interact positively with the curriculum, remain in the classroom and their academic achievement will increase (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Lassen, Steele, Sailor, 2006). Because the ultimate goal is not only behavior compliance but academic success, a replicated study should involve several types of academic measure. Data should be collected on daily grades, benchmark scores, state assessment standards as well as retention records. Because of the high stakes that state assessment plays with school accountability, replication of the study with a direct link to include progress on state assessment will increase the likelihood that more schools will invest in the time and training necessary to engage in the intervention. Achievement gaps continue to exist for African American males for multiple reasons, however the role of discipline cannot be overlooked and the lack of interventions implemented with fidelity exacerbates the gap in progress for male students of color in academic achievement.

Increasing the length of the intervention may provide additional information particularly examining the decreased ODRs throughout the intervention phase. Results in the study showed that as the intervention phase increased student participants were making steady progress. Trends for the increase of daily points were continuing to rise. Increasing the length of the intervention phase will also allow the researchers to investigate whether the receipt of ODRs would continue to decrease.

Prospective research should also consider the use of an electronic method of collecting daily points for student participants. The use of the daily sheets was frequently cumbersome for some students who had organizational issues. Although students were not penalized for losing their point sheet, several students would occasionally lose their sheets, have to return to their teacher for another and then go back to their classes to have the teachers re-fill it out. However, the use of an electronic device makes sense for future research. Next steps should involve the use of a tablet or cell phone to complete the daily points. This could be done through a shared electronic document that can be carried by the student or simply submitted at the end of the class period by the teacher without prompting from the student. Future research should conduct several pilot studies to determine which method would be most convenient, secure and still yield intervention results.

This current study employed the use of the FACTS to determine the specific behavior concerns regarding the student participants. Future research should consider focusing on the intervention specific to particular types of behavior concerns.

Researchers, Lane, Weisenbach, Phillips and Wehby (2007) determined that function-

based interventions have been successful when implemented in a variety of school settings. By specifically isolating certain behavior challenges with particular students it may increase the knowledge base and specificity in which the intervention can be used and promoted. Hunter, Chenier, and Gresham conducted a study on the effectiveness of the Check-in/Check-out intervention specific to students with internalizing behaviors such as social withdrawal and negative self-thoughts. Results from their study showed the intervention's effectiveness through the increase of prosocial replacement behaviors. The researchers confirm the flexibility of the use of the Check-in/Check-out intervention in that it can be adapted for students at various levels whether it be for externalizing or internalizing behaviors. Additional studies must consider extending research on specific behaviors and the use of how the addition of the culturally responsive discourse can enhance the intervention for behaviors specific to student need.

A longitudinal study that measures the implications of culturally responsive techniques and tier 2 interventions within a SWPBS model should be conducted. A study of this magnitude can increase the level of reliable data necessary to support the further implementation of this type of culturally responsive behavioral intervention. Dunlap and colleagues (2010) studied the processes and outcomes of behavioral support by documenting patterns and using multiple measures to evaluate overall changes in behavior across participants for 2 years at a time. Results of their study showed steady progress of the participants over time. An extension of this study building upon a similar framework can increase the level of quality data available for implementation.



### ***Limitations***

One limitation of this study was that the student selection process and outcome measures consisted solely of ratings of behavior and not direct observation measurements. Data used to determine the decrease of problematic behavior solely relied on teacher reports. While these are generally utilized, these types of measurements are definitely subject to cultural bias. Although the SWPBS model had consistent criteria for students to be recommended for a tier 2 intervention and thereby this study, some participants who may have been good candidates may have not been chosen for items not directly related to the criteria but based on committee selection. Therefore, it is conceivable that some students were not screened effectively for participation. One way to address this issue is to include direct observation component in the screening process. Previous research has noted how data reported from teachers can be irregular at times and possibly biased. However, it is commonly used in behavior intervention research and is the data regularly used to make decisions regarding student behavior on a school wide basis.

An additional limitation is the short period that the intervention was applied and no maintenance and generalization data were collected. In this study, students received the intervention for approximately 6-7 weeks depending on their attendance. Due to this possibility, some students may not have received the full benefits of the intervention which may explain the moderate decrease in ODRs. Without maintenance data, it is not uncertain if the intervention can be maintained as the students matriculate to the next grade level, particularly students who would be moving on to the high school. Future

research should focus on extending the scholarship in this area by increasing the intervention time and collecting additional data on the maintenance of appropriate behaviors.

Teacher participants were selected based on the researchers experience and knowledge of culturally response communication style with regard to African American students. Study procedures with regard to this aspect involve significant features of this discourse style that can be elusive and technical for other researchers with little experience of culturally responsive interactions to distinguish. More information should be collected to produce stronger illustrations of the nuances of African American discourse. Future research should include similar studies with other students of color, such as Latino, Native American and Asian students that could enhance the Check-in/Check-out intervention as it relates to the culturally responsive discourse for those students of color.

Finally, another limitation involves the fidelity with which the Check-in/Check-out intervention was collected. Data on the fidelity of the Check-in/Check-out procedures was self-reported through the teacher participants. Anecdotal and sporadic observations were conducted by the researcher to confirm and review the fidelity with which the intervention was implemented. However, future research that can be equitably replicated should include explicit strategies to promote, monitor, and enhance fidelity.

## **Summary**

The present study focused on providing a tier 2 intervention within a SWPBS for African American males. Check-in/Check-out is an intervention that has a solid research base which has shown to be effective primarily for elementary aged students. The focus of this investigation was to intersect the research of culturally responsive discourse to the intervention in an attempt to increase its effectiveness with African American males at the middle level. Teacher participants proficient in this culturally responsive communication style implemented this intervention. This inquiry yielded positive results for student participants with an increase in appropriate behavior measured by points on a daily monitoring form and a decrease in ODRs. This study extended the current research in both the area of SWPBS and the use of culturally responsive behavior interventions.

## APPENDIX A: FACTS

### FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF

Step 1 Student/ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2 **Student Profile:** Please identify at least three strengths or contributions the student brings to school.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Step 3 **Problem Behavior(s): Identify problem behaviors**

<input type="checkbox"/> Tardy	<input type="checkbox"/> Fight/physical Aggression	<input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive	<input type="checkbox"/> Theft
<input type="checkbox"/> Unresponsive	<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Insubordination	<input type="checkbox"/> Vandalism
<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn	<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> Work not done	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Verbally Inappropriate			
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-injury			

Describe problem behavior: \_\_\_\_\_

Step 4 **Identifying Routines: Where, When and With Whom Problem Behaviors are Most Likely.**

Schedule (Times)	Activity	Likelihood of Problem Behavior						Specific Problem Behavior
		Low					High	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	

Step 5

## Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers & Staff (FACTS-Part B)

Step 1 Student/ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Step 2 Routine/Activities/Context: Which routine(only one) from the FACTS-Part A is assessed?

Routine/Activities/Context	Problem Behavior(s)

Step 3 Provide more detail about the problem behavior(s):

What does the problem behavior(s) look like?

How often does the problem behavior(s) occur?

How long does the problem behavior(s) last when it does occur?

What is the intensity/level of danger of the problem behavior(s)?

Step 4 What are the events that predict when the problem behavior(s) will occur? (Predictors)

Related Issues (setting events)	Environmental Features
<input type="checkbox"/> illness      Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> drug use      _____ <input type="checkbox"/> negative social _____ <input type="checkbox"/> conflict at home _____ <input type="checkbox"/> academic failure _____	<input type="checkbox"/> reprimand/correction <input type="checkbox"/> structured activity <input type="checkbox"/> physical demands <input type="checkbox"/> unstructured time <input type="checkbox"/> socially isolated <input type="checkbox"/> tasks too boring <input type="checkbox"/> with peers <input type="checkbox"/> activity too long <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> tasks too difficult _____

Step 5 What consequences appear most likely to maintain the problem behavior(s)?

Things that are Obtained	Things Avoided or Escaped From
<input type="checkbox"/> adult attention      Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> peer attention      _____ <input type="checkbox"/> preferred activity      _____ <input type="checkbox"/> money/things      _____	<input type="checkbox"/> hard tasks      Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> reprimands      _____ <input type="checkbox"/> peer negatives      _____ <input type="checkbox"/> physical effort      _____ <input type="checkbox"/> adult attention      _____

### Step 6 SUMMARY OF BEHAVIOR

Identify the summary that will be used to build a plan of behavior support.

Setting Events & Predictors	Problem Behavior(s)	Maintaining Consequence(s)

Step 7

Step 8

Not very confident					Very
Confident	1	2	3	4	5
					6

**What current efforts have been used to control the problem behavior?**

Strategies for preventing problem behavior	Strategies for responding to problem behavior
<input type="checkbox"/> schedule change    Other: _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> reprimand    Other: _____ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> seating change _____	<input type="checkbox"/> office referral _____
<input type="checkbox"/> curriculum change _____	<input type="checkbox"/> detention _____

March, Homer, Lewis-Palmer, Brown, Crone, Todd, & Carr (2000)

4/24/00

## APPENDIX B: CHECK IN CHECK OUT POINT SHEET

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Points Possible* \_\_\_\_\_

2– Great Job!

*Points Received* \_\_\_\_\_

1– So, so

*# of Points* \_\_\_\_\_

0– Doesn't meet goal

*Goal Met* \_\_\_\_\_

### GOALS:

Target Behaviors	1 <sup>st</sup> Period	2 <sup>nd</sup> Period	3 <sup>rd</sup> Period	5 <sup>th</sup> Period	6 <sup>th</sup> Period	7 <sup>th</sup> Period	8 <sup>th</sup> Period
	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0
	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0
	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0	2 1 0 0

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## REFERENCES

- Adams Hill, D. & Flores, M.M. (2014). Modeling positive behavior interventions and supports for preservice teachers. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 16(2) 93-101.
- Algozzine, B., Wang C., Violette, A.S. (2011). Reexamining the relationship between academic achievement and social behavior. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 13(1), 3-16.
- American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force. (2008). Are zero tolerance policies effective in the schools? An evidentiary review and recommendations. *American Psychologist*, 63, 852–862.
- Anderson, A.R., Christenson, S.L., Sinclair, M.F., Lehr, C.A. (2004). Check & connect: The importance of relationships for promoting engagement with school. *Journal of School Psychology*, 42(2), 95-113.
- Bernstein-Yamashiro, B. (2004). Learning relationships: Teacher-student connection, learning, and identity in high school. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2004(103), 55-70.
- Blake, J.J., Butler, B.R., Lewis, C.W, & Darensbourg, A. (2011) Unmasking the inequitable discipline experiences of urban black girls: Implications for urban educational stakeholders. *Urban Review*, 43(1),90–106.
- Bohanon, H., Fenning, P., Carney, K.L., Minnis-Kim, M.J., Anderson,-Harriss, S., Moroz, K.B., Hicks, K.J., Kasper, B.B., Culos, C., Sailor, W., Pigott, T.D. (2006).



- School wide application of positive support in an urban high school: A case study. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 8(3), 131-145.
- Bondy, E., Ross, D. D., Gallingane, C., & Hambacher, E. (2007). Culturally responsive classroom management and more. *Urban Education*, 42(4), 326-348.
- Bradshaw, C., Mitchell, M., & Leaf, P. (2010). Examining the effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports on student outcomes: Results from a randomized controlled effectiveness trial in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 12(3), 133-148.
- Brown, D. F. (2004). Urban teachers' professed classroom management strategies: Reflections of culturally responsive teaching. *Urban Education*, 39(3), 266-289.
- Campbell, A. & Anderson, C.M. (2011). Check-in/Check-out: a systematic evaluation and component analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 44(2), 315–326.
- Campbell, A., & Anderson, C. M. (2008). Enhancing effects of check in/check out with function-based support. *Behavioral Disorders*, 33, 233-245.
- Casteel, C. A. (2000). African American students' perceptions of their treatment by Caucasian teachers. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 27(3), 143-148.
- Cheney, D., Stage, S. A., Hawken, L., Lynass, L., Mielenz, C., & Waugh, M. (2009). A two-year outcome study of the Check, Connect, and Expect intervention for students at-risk of severe behavior problems. *Journal of Emotional and Behavior Disorders*, 17, 226–243.
- Cheney, D., Lynass, L., Flower, A., Waugh, M., & Iwaszuk, W. (2010). The check, connect, and expect program: A targeted, tier two intervention in the school-wide

- positive behavior support model. *Preventing School Failure*, 54,152-158.
- Council of State Governments Justice Center. (2011). Breaking Schools' Rules: A Statewide Study of How School Discipline Relates to Students' Success and Juvenile Justice involvement. Retrieved, November 15, 2012, from <http://knowledgecenter.csg.org/drupal/content/breaking-schools-rules-statewide-study>.
- Crone, D. A., Horner, R. H., & Hawken, L. S. (2004). *Responding to problem behavior in schools: The behavior education program*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Davis, H. A. (2003). Conceptualizing the role and influence of student-teacher relationships on children's social and cognitive development. *Educational Psychologist*, 38(4), 207-234.
- Davis, H. A. (2006). Exploring the contexts of relationship quality between middle school students and teachers. *Elementary School Journal*, 106(3), 193-223.
- Debnam, K.J., Pas, E.T. & Bradshaw, C.P. (2012). Secondary and tertiary support systems in schools implementing school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports: A preliminary descriptive analysis. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 14(3), 142-152.
- Downey, D. B., & Pribesh, S. (2004). When race matters: Teachers' evaluations of students' classroom behavior. *Sociology of Education*, 77, 267-282.
- Duda, M. A., & Utey, C. A. (2005). Positive behavioral support for at-risk students: Promoting social competence in at-risk culturally diverse learners in urban schools. *Multiple Voices*, 8(1), 128-143.

- Dunlap, G., Carr, E.G., Horner, R.H., Koegel, R.L., Sailor, W., Clarke, S., Koegel, L.K., Albin, R.W., Vaughn, B.J., McLaughlin, D.M., James, K.M., Todd, A.W., Newton, J. S., Lucyshyn, J., Griggs, P., Bohanon, H., Choi, J., Hoon, V. L., Minjarez, M., Buschbacher, P., Fox, L. (2010). A descriptive, multiyear examination of positive behavior support. *Behavioral Disorders, (34)4*, 259-279.
- Fairbanks, S., Sugai, G., Guardino, D., & Lathrop, M. (2007). Response to intervention: Examining classroom behavior support in second grade. *Exceptional Children, 73*, 288–310.
- Fallon, L.M., McCarthy, S.R. & Hagermoser Sanetti, L.M. (2014). School-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) in the classroom: Assessing perceived challenges to consistent implementation in Connecticut schools. *Education and Treatment of Children, 37* (1), 1-24.
- Filter, K. J., McKenna, M. K., Benedict, E. A., Horner, R. H., Todd, A. W., & Watson, J. (2007). Check in/ check out: A post-hoc evaluation of an efficient, secondary-level targeted intervention for reducing problem behaviors in schools. *Education and Treatment of Children, 30*(1), 69-84.
- Flannery, K.B., Fenning, P., Kato, M.M. & McIntosh. (2013) Effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports and fidelity of implementation of problem behavior in high schools. *School Psychology Quarterly, 29*(2), 111-124.
- Ford, D.Y. & Kea, C.D. (2009). Creating culturally responsive instruction: For students'

- and teachers' sake. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 41(9), 1-16
- Gay, G. (1993). Building cultural bridges: A bold proposal for teacher education. *Education and Urban Society*, 25(3), 285-299.
- Gay, G. (2000). Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research and practice. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Good, T.L., & Nichols, S.L. (2001). Expectancy effects in the classroom: A special focus on improving the reading performance of minority students in first-grade classrooms. *Educational Psychologist*, 36(2), 113-126.
- Gregory, A., & Weinstein, R. S. (2008). The Discipline Gap and African Americans: Defiance or Cooperation in the High School Classroom. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(4), 455-475.
- Hardré, P. L., Sullivan, D. W., & Roberts, N. (2008). Rural teachers' best motivating strategies: A blending of teachers' and students' perspectives. *The Rural Educator*, 30(1) 19-31.
- Hawken, L, O'Neil, R, MacLeod, K. (2011). An Investigation of the Impact of Function of Problem Behavior on Effectiveness of the Behavior Education Program (BEP). *Education and Treatment of Children*, 34(4), 551-574.
- Hawken, L. S., MacLeod, K. S. & Rawlings, L. (2007). Effects of the Behavior Education Program (BEP) on problem behavior with elementary school students. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 9, 94-101.

- Hawken, L. & Horner, R. (2003). Evaluation of a targeted group intervention within a school-wide system of behavior support, *Journal of Behavioral Education, 12*(3), 225-240.
- Horner, R.H., Sugai, G., Smolkowski, K., Eber, L., Nakasato, J., Todd, A.W., et al. (2009) A randomized, wait-list controlled effectiveness trial assessing school-wide positive behavior support in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 6*(1), 3-12.
- Horner, R., Sugai, G., Smolkowski, K., Todd, A., Nakasato, J., & Esperanza, J., (2009). A randomized control trial of school-wide positive behavior support in elementary schools. *Journal of Positive Behavioral Interventions, 11*(3), 133-144.
- Horner, R. H., Todd, A. W., Lewis-Palmer, T., Irvin, L. K., Sugai, G., & Boland, J. B. (2004). The School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET): A research instrument for assessing school-wide positive behavior support. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 6*, 3–12.
- Howard, T.C. (2001). Telling their side of the story: African-American student's perceptions of culturally relevant teaching. *The Urban Review, 33*(2), 131-149.
- Hunter, K.K., Chenier, J.S. & Gresham, F.M. (2014). Evaluation of check in/check out For students with internalizing behavior problems. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 22* (3), 135–148.
- Irvin, L.K., Tobin, T.J., Sprague, J.R., Sugai, G., & Vincent, C. G. (2004). Validity of

- office discipline referral measures as indices of school-wide behavioral status and effects of school-wide behavioral interventions. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 6(3), 131-147.
- Johnson-Gros, K.N., Lyons, E.A., & Griffin, J.R. (2008). Active supervision: An intervention to reduce high-school tardiness. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 31(1), 39-53.
- Kennedy, B. L. (2011). The importance of student and teacher interactions for disaffected middle school students: A grounded theory study of community day schools. *Urban Education*, 46(1), 4-33.
- Kennedy, C.H. (2005). *Single case designs for educational research*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Kern, L. (2009). Cultural considerations in the development of school-based interventions for African American adolescents with emotional and behavioral disorders. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 78(3), 321-364.
- Krezmien, M. P., Leone, P. E., & Achilles, G. M. (2006). Suspension, race, and disability: Analysis of statewide practices and reporting. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 14, 217–226.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2006). From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools. *Educational Researcher*, 35(7), 3-12.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 32(3), 465-491.

- Lassen, S., Steele, M., & Sailor, W. (2006). The relationship of school-wide positive behavior support to academic achievement in an urban middle school. *Psychology in Schools* 43(6), 701-712.
- Lehr, C. A., Sinclair, M. R., & Christenson, S. L. (2004). Addressing student engagement and truancy prevention during the elementary school years: A replication study of the check & connect model. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 9(3), 279-301.
- Lewis, T.J. & Sugai, G. (1999). Effective behavior support: A systems approach to proactive school wide management. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 31(6), 1-24.
- Luiselli, J. K., Putnam, R. F., Handler, M. W., & Feinberg, A. B. (2005). Whole-school positive behavior support: Effects on student discipline problems and academic performance. *Educational Psychology* 25(2-3), 183-198.
- Luiselli, J. Putnam, R., & Sunderland M. (2002). Longitudinal evaluation of behavior support interventions in public middle school. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 4 (3), 182-188.
- Lynass, L., Tsai, S., Richman, T.D., Cheney, D. (2012). Social expectations and behavioral indicators in school-wide positive behavior supports: A national study of behavior matrices. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 14(3), 153-161.
- March, R. E. & Horner, R.H. (2002). Feasibility and contributions of functional behavioral assessment in schools. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 10(3), 158–170.
- Meehan, B. T., Hughes, J. N., & Cavell, T. A. (2003). Teacher student relationships as

- compensatory resources for aggressive children. *Child Development*, 74, 1145-1157.
- McCurdy, B. L., Kunsch, C., & Reibstein, S. (2007). Secondary prevention in the urban school: Implementing the Behavior Education Program. *Preventing School Failure*, 51(3) 12-19.
- McHugh, R.M., Horner, C.G & Wallace, T. (2013). Bridges and barriers: Adolescent perceptions of student-teacher relationships. *Urban Education*, 48(1), 9-43.
- Kent McIntosh, K., Predy, L.K., Upreti, Hume, A. E., Turri, M.G., Mathews, S. (2014). Perceptions of contextual features related to implementation and sustainability of school-wide positive behavior support. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 16(1) 31-43.
- Milner, H. R. (2011). Culturally relevant pedagogy in a diverse urban classroom. *Urban Review*, 43, 66-89.
- Muscott, H., Mann, E. & LeBrun, M. (2008). Positive behavioral interventions and supports in New Hampshire: Effects of large scale implementation of school wide positive behavior support on student discipline and academic achievement. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 10(3), 190-205.
- Neal, L.I., McCray, A.D. & Webb-Johnson, G. (2001). Teacher's reactions to African American student's movement styles. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 36(3), 168-174.



- Neal, L.I., McCray, A.D., Webb-Johnson, G. & Bridgest, S.T. (2003). The effects of African American movement styles on teacher's perceptions and reactions. *The Journal of Special Education*, 37(1), 49-57.
- Noltemeyer, A. & Mcloughlin, C.S. (2010). Patterns of exclusionary discipline by school typology, ethnicity, and their interaction. *Perspectives on Urban Education*, 7(2), 27-40.
- Ogbu, J. (1990). Minority education in comparative perspective. *Journal of Negro Education*, 59(1), 45-56.
- Ozer, E. J., Wolf, J. P., & Kong, C. (2008). Sources of perceived school connection among ethnically-diverse urban adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 23(4),438-470.
- Rivkin, S. G., Hanushek, E. A., & Kain, J. F. (2005). Teachers, schools, and academic achievement. *Econometrica*, 73(2), 417-458.
- Simonsen, B., Myers, D. & Briere, D.E. (2011). Comparing a behavioral Check-in/Check-out intervention to standard practice in an urban middle school setting using an experimental group design. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 13(1), 31-48.
- Skiba, R. J., Horner, R. H., Chung, C., Rausch, M. K., May, S., & Tobin, T. (2011). Race is not neutral: A national investigation of African American and Latino disproportionality in school discipline. *School Psychology Review*, 40, 85–107.

- Skiba RJ, Michael RS, Nardo AC., & Peterson RL. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The Urban Review*, 34(3), 17–342.
- Skiba, R.J., Peterson, RL. & Williams, T. (1997). Office referrals and suspension: Disciplinary intervention in middle schools. *Education and Treatment of Children*. 20(2), 95–315.
- Sugai, G., Homer, R. H., Dunlap, G., Hieneman, M., Lewis, T. J., Nelson, C. M., Scott, T., Liaupsin, C., Sailor, W., Turnbull, A. P., Turnbull, H. R., HI, Wickham, D., Wilcox, B., & Ruef, M. (2000). Applying positive behavior support and functional behavioral Assessment in schools. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 2(3). 131-143.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. R. (2006). A promising approach for expanding and sustaining school-wide positive behavior support. *School Psychology Review*, 35(2), 245–259.
- Tajalli, H. & Garba. (2014). Discipline or prejudice? Overrepresentation of minority students in disciplinary alternative education programs. *Urban Review* 46(4), 620-631.
- Todd, A. W., Kaufman, A., Meyer, G., & Horner, R. H. (2008). The Effects of a targeted intervention to reduce problem behaviors: Elementary school implementation of check in - check out. *Journal of Positive Behavioral Interventions*, 10(1), 46-55.
- Townsend, B.L. (2000). The disproportionate discipline of African American learners: Suspensions and expulsions. *Exceptional Children*, 66(3), 381–391.

- Shu-Fei Tsai, S. & Cheney, C. (2012). The impact of the adult–child relationship on school adjustment for children at risk of serious behavior problems. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 20(2) 105-114.
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights. *Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Snapshot (School Discipline)* March 21, 2014.
- Vavrus F, Cole K. (2002). “I didn't do nothin’”: The discursive construction of school suspension. *The Urban Review*. 34 (1), 87–111.
- Vincent, C.G. & Tobin, T.J. (2011). The relationship between implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavior Support and disciplinary exclusion of students from various ethnic backgrounds with and without disabilities. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 19(4), 217-232.
- Wallace, M., Goodkind, S., Wallace, C., & Bachman, J.G. (2008). Racial, ethnic, and gender differences in school discipline among U.S. high school students: 1991–2005. *The Negro Educational Review*, 59, 47–62.
- Ware, F. (2006). Warm demander pedagogy culturally responsive teaching that supports a culture of achievement for African American students. *Urban Education*, 41(4), 427-456.
- Wimberly, G. L. (2002). School relationships foster success for African American students (pp. 21). Iowa City, IA: ACT.
- Webb-Johnson, G. (2003). Behaving while Black: A hazardous reality for African American learners? *Beyond Behavior*, 1,3-7.

Weinstein, C., Curran, M. & Tomilson-Clarke, S. (2003). Culturally responsive classroom management: Awareness into action. *Theory into Practice*, 42(4), 269-276.

## VITA

Nicole Ann Whetstone was born in Norfolk, Virginia. After completing her work at Crockett High School in Austin, Texas in 1991, she entered Prairie View A &M University in Prairie View, Texas. She received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from Prairie View A &M University in May 1995. She entered Northern Illinois University in August of 1995 working as a caseworker and teacher assistant in DeKalb, Illinois. Nicole earned a Master's in Education with an emphasis on Curriculum & Instruction and Secondary Education. In August of 1999, she began teaching Special Education in the Austin Independent School District, in Austin, Texas. In August, 2005, she entered the Graduate School at The University of Texas at Austin. During her tenure she participated in both The University of Texas Principalship Cohort as well as the Department of Special Education.

Address: [mz.nicw@gmail.com](mailto:mz.nicw@gmail.com)

This dissertation was typed by the author.