

# PBIS Updates

Educating Georgia's Future

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FALL 2017

## FROM PBIS STATE COORDINATOR JUSTIN HILL

The Georgia PBIS state implementation team met in October at the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) in Atlanta to discuss



the need to revise the PBIS State Strategic Plan. The planning day was facilitated by Heather George, PhD, a research partner with the federally funded OSEP Technical Assistance (TA) Center for PBIS and Georgia's resource agent. Joining Dr. George was Susan Barrett, an implementation partner with the national PBIS TA center who also specializes in mental health integration into the PBIS framework.

The meeting was attended by representatives from Georgia Appleseed, Georgia's State Senate, DBHDD, Griffin-Spalding Schools, Newton County Schools, Muscogee County Schools, DeKalb County Schools, Gwinnett County Schools, Metro RESA, Pioneer RESA, SW GA RESA, GaDOE, Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS), Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Georgia College and State University and Georgia Southern University.

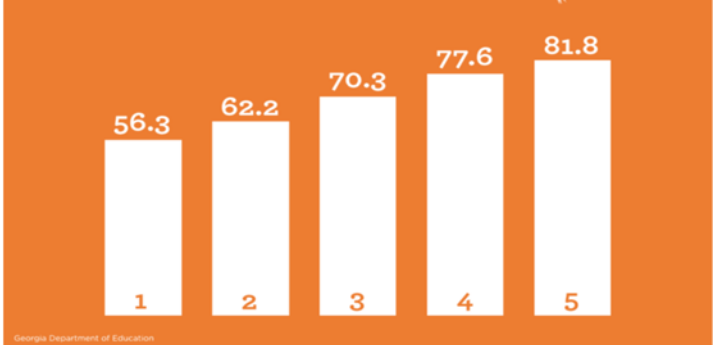
The day ended with a drafting of new goals and objectives encompassing expanded support areas including developing a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), increased support to mental wellness in schools, behavior support to schools and districts in the classroom and with developing a Tier 2 support system. The state team was challenged to focus on long-term sustainability through increased collaboration, integration and communication.

Georgia PBIS will finalize their strategic plan in 2018 and publish at [www.gadoe.org/gapbis](http://www.gadoe.org/gapbis).

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## COLLEGE AND CAREER READY PERFORMANCE INDEX, 2017 BY SCHOOL CLIMATE STAR RATING



This graph produced by the Get Georgia Reading Campaign.

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) reports that there is a 25.5 point difference between schools with a 1-star and those with a 5-star on Georgia's School Climate Rating system for the 2016-2017 school year. In the area of English Language Arts (ELA) proficiency, the difference between schools with a 1-star and those with a 5-star rating is 30.5 points.

Data continues to show that a high correlation exists between high-fidelity PBIS implementation and schools scoring 4 or 5 on Georgia's School Climate Rating system. Approximately 90% of high-fidelity PBIS schools have 4 or 5 stars. PBIS improves school climate!

For more information on Georgia's Star Climate Rating system please visit [www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org). - Justin Hill

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## AROUND THE DISTRICTS: BIBB COUNTY

### FOR THE FIRST TIME, FOUR BIBB COUNTY SCHOOLS RECEIVED 5-STAR SCHOOL CLIMATE RATINGS

MiMi Gudenrath, GaPBIS Regional Specialist

The 2017 CCRPI and School Climate Star Rating results reflect overall increases for this Active PBIS District. Superintendent Dr. Curtis Jones notes the “district’s commitment to literacy and school climate for the improvements.” Their GaDOE PBIS Regional Support Specialist MiMi Gudenrath credits the district’s District Leadership Team (DLT) and their PBIS District Improvement Plan.

**“Bibb County has one our state’s best PBIS District Leadership Teams; they are fully committed to improving school climate.”**

The four schools celebrated for this district first are also active PBIS schools: Heard Elementary, Heritage Elementary, Springdale Elementary, and Vineville Academy of the Arts.

An additional nine schools, also active PBIS schools, received 4-School Climate Stars: Alexander II Magnet School, Carter Elementary, Ingram-Pye Elementary, Lane Elementary, Porter Elementary, Taylor Elementary, Skyview Elementary, Williams Elementary and Howard Middle.

<b>Bibb County Schools</b>			
<b>College and Career Readiness (CCRPI)</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>GAINS</b>
<b>Elementary Schools Average CCRPI Score</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>64.2</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Middle Schools Average CCRPI Score</b>	<b>56.6</b>	<b>57.8</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>High Schools Average CCRPI Score</b>	<b>62.4</b>	<b>69.5</b>	<b>11.4%</b>
<b>District Average CCRPI Score</b>	<b>61.4</b>	<b>64.9</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
<b>State Average CCRPI Score</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>75.0</b>	<b>2%</b>

## AROUND THE DISTRICTS: MUSCOGEE COUNTY

### FORREST ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SEEING GREATER GAINS

Tammi Clarke, GaPBIS Regional Specialist

Forrest Road Elementary School in Muscogee County, Georgia has cut the percentage of beginning learners almost in half, going from low achieving and low progress to high achieving and high progress. They have seen increases in both their Lexile



and College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI) scores. Also noted is an increase in their School Climate Star Rating where the school increased a full-star from 3-stars in 2016 to 4-stars in 2017.

Ms. Stephanie Dalton, the school’s principal, attributes much of their academic gains to their commitment to school climate and the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework starting in 2015-16 saying, “we believed if we focused on building a strong PBIS framework everything else would improve!” The results were better than she imagined.

She believes that the root of the school’s success can be found in their innovative faculty that is open to change and committed to improving school climate. When they started implementing PBIS “everyone was eager to do the work... volunteering for everything!” The team made changes that resulted in positive outcomes, stress has been reduced and “when teachers need help now it is truly a legitimate need.”

Teachers who were not confident in the classroom are now using key PBIS strategies and the faculty is more committed to establishing a positive learning environment.

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The adult mindset is very different than when they began their PBIS journey. They stopped focusing on trying to change individual student behaviors and instead worked as a united team to change adult behavior and teach students what is expected, today they are more proactive. She stated that it was difficult for everyone to adapt, it was a hard battle full of “sweat, blood and tears” and tough conversations, but they did it together and she is convinced her teachers are doing what’s best for kids.

**“When there was no system to teach and acknowledge positive behaviors, we were purely reactive.”**

However, it wasn’t always this way at Forrest Road Elementary. Tracy Barnes, a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher at Forrest Road and the PBIS Team Leader stated that behavior was a major concern before PBIS. She has spent 9 out of her 15 years in education at Forrest Road and remembers what it was like when there was no system to teach and acknowledge positive behaviors, they were purely reactive. She said that many of the students have responded positively and the data shows office discipline referrals (ODRs) have dropped significantly.

Jennifer Johnson, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and PBIS Team Recorder has been at Forrest Road for 15 years and says, “We are more of a family with a supportive culture, both professionally and personally.”



Left to right: Stephanie Dalton (Principal), Cholana Foley (PBIS Coach), Jennifer Johnson (Recorder) and Tracy Barnes (PBIS Team Leader)

## Forrest Road Elementary

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	GAINS
<b>PBIS IMPLEMENTATION</b>	NA	½ Year	Full Year	
<b>CCRPI</b>	50.8	58.6	70.5	+19.7
<b>LEXILES</b>	598	686	749	+151
<b>STAR CLIMATE RATING</b>	3	3	4	+1 star

She has also seen a boost in staff morale and attributes it to the shift in being more positive saying “it’s more fun!”

The school stresses that there are two important keys to school climate success. First, make small changes with a gradual roll-out. Second, get constant feedback from staff throughout the process to increase buy-in.

**“When data is being discussed, climate and behavior are always part of the conversation.”**

Cholana Foley, a veteran 12 year educator and 2nd grade teacher, serves as PBIS Coach at Forrest Road. According to Ms. Foley, “teachers feel less helpless than in the past, now that they have something to help with behavior.” She stresses the significance of having administrative support when it comes to implementing PBIS saying that Ms. Dalton is “active, involved, listens and allows feedback and dialogue.” She said that “allowing the teachers to lead and make decisions improves buy-in.”

This past year Forrest Road Elementary School has made gains often seen in “Turn Around” Schools. When schools typically take 3-5 years to build a Tier 1 framework for PBIS, they went from “Installing” to “Operational” in only 1 year. Through teamwork and commitment, they have built a culture of coaching and support that ensures all school settings provide a consistent, predictable, positive and safe environment to maximize teaching and learning.



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## MENTAL WELLNESS IN SCHOOLS

### School-Based Health Centers: Enhancing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports in Georgia

Tammi Clarke, GaPBIS Regional Specialist

Dr. Veda Johnson and the Partners for Equity in Child and Adolescent Health, Department of Pediatrics, Emory University



Dr. Veda Johnson examining a student

School of Medicine are working to expand School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) throughout the state of Georgia. These clinics are in schools or on school grounds and offer comprehensive primary health care services including physical, mental, and whenever possible oral health for students, family members and school staff.

**“Now 20 Georgia counties have comprehensive School-Based Health Centers (SBHC).”**

Core staff routinely includes a pediatrician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant, social worker/mental health counselor, school nurse, medical assistant and community outreach worker.

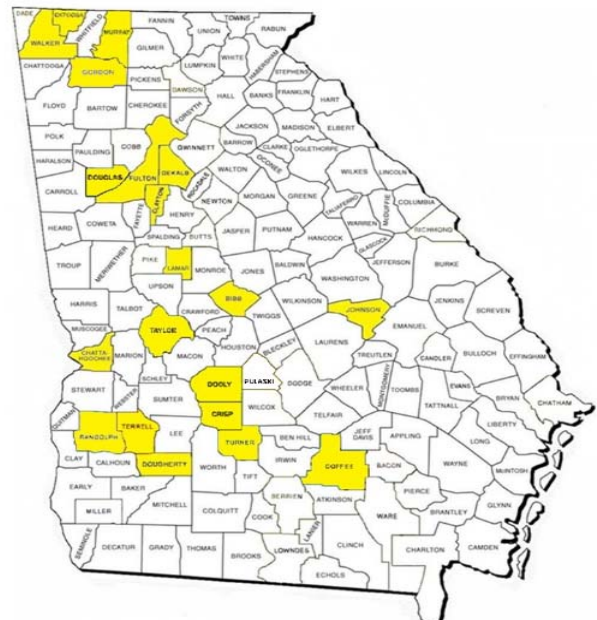
There were only two SBHCs in Georgia from 1994 to 2009 located at Whiteford Elementary and Coan Middle School in Atlanta. Now twenty counties in Georgia have comprehensive SBHCs and the School-Based Health Center Project goal is to add two centers each year.

On October 20, 2017 the Georgia School-Based Health Alliance convened a grantee workshop that included a tour of the HEALing Community Center’s School-Based Health Clinic at Hollis Innovation Academy as part of the grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony. Plans for additional openings in

**“School health programs may help close the achievement gap between disparate socioeconomic groups of students.”**

2017/2018 include a center at College Park Elementary (FHCGA), 2 centers in Dougherty County, 2 centers in Randolph and Turner Counties and a telehealth center in Gordon County. Proposed openings for 2018/2019 are in Floyd and Madison Counties. A Vision Center is also projected to open in Albany January 2018.

Twenty-one percent (15 million) of our nation’s children lived below the poverty line in 2015 (Kids Count, 2017).



**Yellow:** Comprehensive School-Based Health Centers currently open (as of September 2017).

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These children are at risk for a variety of negative outcomes including, 1) increased rates of health problems and mortality, 2) increased risk of academic underachievement, school drop-out, and unemployment and 3) emotional and behavioral problems.

The Kids Count Data Book which provides a yearly snapshot of how America's children and families are doing ranks Georgia 42nd overall, 34th in education and 44th in economic well-being. Georgia also has the 3rd highest percentage of high school dropouts in the country. Finally, over 189,000 of Georgia's children are uninsured without a medical home or access to routine health care (<http://gafcp.org/kids-count>).

The SBHC model that Dr. Johnson endorses is what she calls "a vehicle to maximize the educational achievement for children." She states that "poverty is the greatest single threat to a child's well-being, education is a pathway out of poverty and we promote SBHCs as a means to address the physical, emotional and dental (if possible) challenges that impede children's capacity to do well in school and in life."

## "Poverty is the greatest single threat to a child's well-being."

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) have been proven to be models of healthcare that significantly increase access to services and improve overall health of children and adolescents. In addition to increasing access to quality health care, SBHCs provide a sense of security to parents who rest assured in the knowledge that their child's health care is covered at no or low cost; to school leaders who recognize that prompt attention to student illness means a faster return to the classroom; and to employers who appreciate that employee productivity is affected when they are unable to attend to their sick children. SBHCs also provide a savings to the public by reducing inappropriate emergency room usage among children and adolescents.

Although SBHCs may vary based on community need and resources, according to the National Assembly on School-Based Health Care the basic tenets of SBHCs are that they:

- are located in schools or on school grounds and work within the school to become a part of the school;
- provide a comprehensive range of services that address the physical and behavioral health needs of students;
- employ a multidisciplinary team of providers to care for the students, i.e. nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, physicians, etc.;
- provide clinical services through a qualified health provider such as a hospital, health department, or medical practice;
- require parents to sign written consents for their children to receive services;
- have an advisory board consisting of community representatives, parents, and youth to provide planning and oversight.

Information for this article was provided by The Partners for Equity in Child and Adolescent Health, Department of Pediatrics, Emory University School of Medicine.

School districts interested in learning more about school-based health centers in Georgia may visit <https://www.pediatrics.emory.edu/centers/PARTNERS> or contact:

Ruth Ellis, MPH, JM  
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404.778.1402  
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**PARTNERS for Equity in Child and Adolescent Health**



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## GAPBIS UPDATES

### Welcome Aboard!

Please help us welcome our two newest members of the GaDOE PBIS team Tammi Clarke (L) and Timi



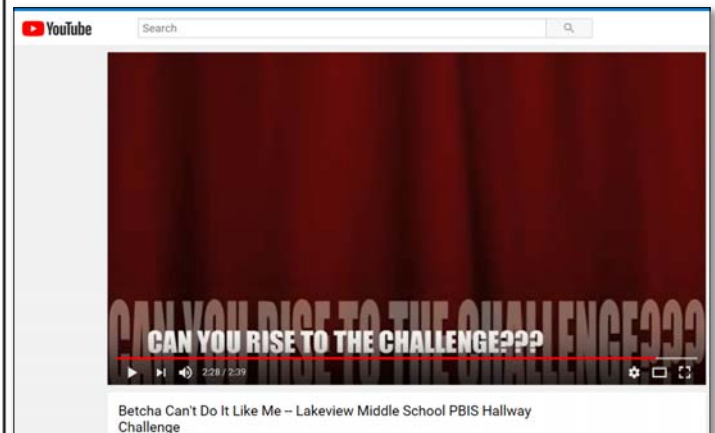
Hunt (R). They are also our very first state-funded positions to support PBIS in Georgia. Thank you Georgia lawmakers! Their support will allow the GaPBIS team to extend greater school climate support to rural Georgia districts. Welcome Timi and Tammi!

### GaPBIS Training Updates

- **More than 665,000 students (39%) are currently served in PBIS schools, this represents an increase of over 400,000 students since 2015.**
- **Approximately 551 schools have been trained in School-wide PBIS since 2015, this represents an increase of 97%.**
- **There has been an increase of 120% in the number of Georgia schools implementing the PBIS framework with fidelity since 2015.**
- **Fifty-three percent of Georgia's school systems now have active district leadership teams who demonstrate a commitment to improving school climate through the PBIS framework.**

### Teaching Behavior with YouTube

Catoosa County Schools is a new PBIS District. Lakeview Middle School, one of their recently trained PBIS schools, recently identified the need to improve behavior in their hallways. Their use of YouTube to Teach Social Skills in the hallway is an innovative practice to follow! Check them out on YouTube, Betcha Can't Do It Like Me, Lakeview Middle School.



### CONTACT US



For more information about how to join our PBIS statewide network please contact:

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