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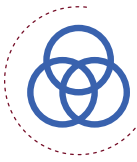
PBIS

Positive Behavioral
Interventions & Supports

ENHANCING TEAM FUNCTIONING IN SCHOOLS' MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS

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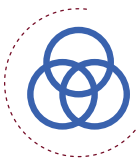
Enhancing Team Functioning in Schools' Multi-Tiered System of Supports

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Purpose

Teaming is pervasive across professions and organizations, including schools where they drive shared decision making processes. Teaming may have many benefits in schools when done well. Yet, teams face many challenges to implementing effective teamwork, like ineffective leadership and mismatched goals. Given challenges, it is important for schools to be intentional about how they go about implementing teamwork. Without attention to how teaming is implemented it is unlikely school teams will overcome and/or mitigate these challenges likely leading to frustration, disengagement, and missed opportunities to improve student outcomes. This practice guide is intended to help school teams address these challenges and is organized primarily into two sections. After a brief introduction, we first review the evidence for teaming and the elements of several empirically supported models of effective teaming in schools. Then, we synthesize these models and present their common elements that drive team success.



Introduction

Teams are most commonly associated with sports and competition, but the concept of a group of individuals working together to achieve a certain goal transcends the field, court, and pitch. In fact, teams are used in a wide variety of settings including, but not limited to, businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, governmental agencies, and medical settings. For a long time, teams have been an effective way to implement shared decision-making and ongoing problem solving. Some things that make an effective team are leadership, encouraging diverse viewpoints, and having adequate resources to function well (Puente-Palacios & Trinchao de Jesus Barouh, 2021; Yang & Guy, 2011). When teams function well, functioning of their organizations is enhanced, and team members experience higher work satisfaction (Yang & Guy, 2011). For example, in a study of medical students, working in teams reduced diagnostic errors. It is likely that the pairs were able to work through errors together and reason together. In addition to this, pairs were overall more confident in their decisions (Hautz et al., 2015).

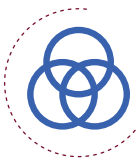
Teaming in schools has grown in popularity, including administration teams, grade-level teams, problem solving teams, and student services teams, among many other types of teams within school systems (Rosenfield et al., 2018). Teaming in schools is associated with increased student attendance and academic achievement (Gaumer Erickson et al., 2014; Oppenheim, 1999), as well as decreased levels of student misconduct (Gaumer Erickson et al., 2014;



Smith et al., 1997). In fact, a recent meta-analysis synthesizing the evidence of effectiveness for student support teaming in schools found large effects on student academic and behavioral outcomes (Sims et al., 2023). Furthermore, schools with team-based decision-making reported better communication, enhanced opportunities to align their goals, and streamlined services that allowed for more professional support and decreased burnout (Anderson-Butcher & Ashton, 2004).

Teaming in Multi-Tiered System of Supports

A primary reason teaming has grown in schools is its prominent role in multi-tiered frameworks such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Response to Intervention (RtI), and the Interconnected Systems Framework (ISF). All these multi-tiered system of supports rely on teaming to install a tiered continuum of practices addressing



students' social, emotional, behavioral, and academic functioning. For example, in PBIS and the ISF, teams comprised of some combination of school personnel, family representatives, vested community partners, and/or district coaches use a data-based problem-solving process to direct and monitor implementation, progress, and fidelity of universal Tier 1 practices for all students, selective Tier 2 practices for some students with emerging risk, and indicated Tier 3 practices for a few students with more intensive needs. These frameworks are directed and supported by teams at the building, district, community, and even state levels. Thus, the teaming practices and effectiveness of all teams working together to install a MTSS, such as PBIS and ISF, are critical to achieving the intended outcomes for students and families.

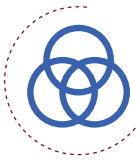
Teaming Challenges

Despite the popularity of teaming, its prominent role in common educational practices, and evidence supporting its association with important outcomes, there is often very little attention in practice given to how teaming is implemented and whether any team's intended outcomes are realized or not. The lack of attention to teaming implementation in schools is problematic because of the many challenges teams face in being effective and efficient. For example, many school teams struggle with ineffective leadership or a lack of authority, disruptive team members, and competing demands, such that the team's ability to organize, plan, and implement supportive programming across a multi-tiered continuum of supports is impaired. Some argue that working in a team comes with its own issues. Instead of working on their

own, individuals now must interact with others and contribute to decision making. Because team members will not always have the same ideas, teamwork comes with managing different views and opinions, and sometimes even opposing goals. Opposing goals can arise internally between team members and externally between teams in the same organization or community. Ambiguous goals or lack of clarity of goals can also cause frustration and stifle a team's ability to accomplish key tasks.

Despite being members of a team, team members often continue to work in isolation, especially if they lose faith in the team's leadership or the team's effectiveness. If a team member is unable to complete their assigned tasks or if they do so poorly (a likely outcome if poorly defined or ill-fit to their expertise), other members may begin to distrust them or doubt their competence in general, ensuring that both mutual support and team effectiveness suffer. Skill diversity and distribution also challenge teamwork especially as it relates to tasks assigned to the team and the individual team members. Too much redundancy in skillsets narrows the work a team can perform while mismatches between skillsets and the work of individual team members increases the likelihood the team's work is poorly completed, if at all.

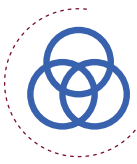
Teaming to install a MTSS presents additional challenges many school systems encounter. Installing a MTSS requires the organization of multiple teams managing interrelated work across the entire tiered continuum of practices. For example, at Tier 1 a team may use discipline data to decide in what classroom and non-classroom settings behavioral expectations



may need to be re-taught and further reinforced, or use universal mental health screening data to identify grade levels in need of additional social skill instruction. At the same time, a team identifying students in need of additional supports at Tiers 2 or 3 may use the same data to understand the nature of a student's need and plan an intervention. This work all requires multiple teams, data-based decision-making conversations in team meetings, and follow through on action plans between meetings by both team members and others who provide ideas to the team or interact with it less formally (e.g., teachers, family members).

In addition to the challenges already discussed for teaming in schools, schools installing a MTSS often

struggle to organize their teams across the continuum in the most efficient and effective way possible. Schools may end up with redundant teams (e.g., school climate team and Tier 1 team), unassigned tasks (e.g., fidelity or outcome monitoring of an intervention such as social skills groups or Check-In Check Out; Crone et al., 2010), or unnecessarily long meetings where every decision is discussed and nothing is actually systematized (e.g., individualized progress monitoring plan discussed for every student in a Tier 2 intervention). Thus, how schools organize and assign the work required to install a MTSS through a primary team or a set of coordinated teams matters for doing so as efficiently and effectively as possible.



Section 1: Elements of Effective Teaming in Evidence-Based Teaming Frameworks

In this first section, we review the elements of several empirically-supported frameworks for effective teaming, including the following four: Team-Initiated Problem Solving (Horner et al., 2018), TEACH Framework (American Psychological Association [APA], 2015), 6 Conditions (6 Conditions, n.d.), and Teams that Work (Tannenbaum & Salas, 2020). Although all the frameworks we review are supported by empirical evidence of effectiveness, it is important to note that our review is not exhaustive, and other frameworks for effective teaming may be available.

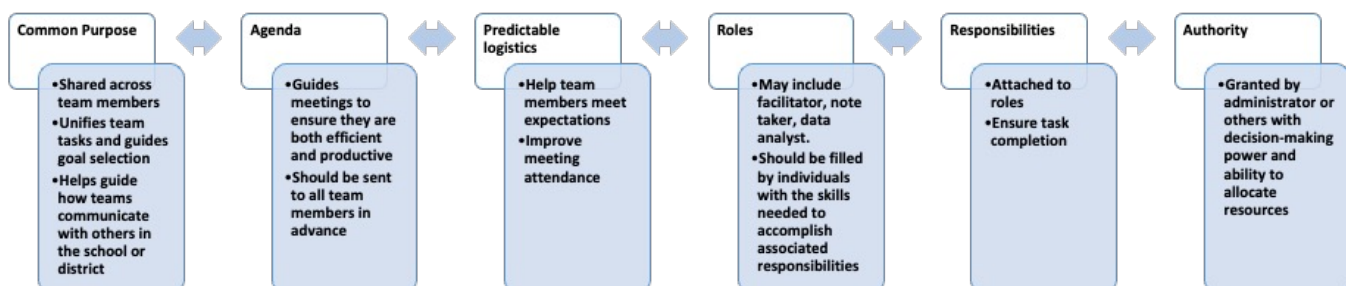
Team-Initiated Problem Solving

Team-Initiated Problem Solving (TIPS) is an evidence-based framework for school teams that emphasizes data-driven decision making, clearly defined team member roles, and efficient meeting practices (Horner et al., 2018). The framework is most commonly implemented within PBIS implementation and encompasses two core constructs: (1) essential meeting foundations that structure teaming and (2) a systematic, iterative data-based decision making process that incorporates student data (Algozzine et al., 2012;

Chaparro et al., 2022). To learn more about the data-based decision making process, see Chapparo et al. (2022). Here we focus on the essential meeting foundations comprising TIPS, displayed in Figure 1 below and including:

- A **common purpose**, or the reason a team is formed and sustained. The purpose should align with the problem a team is trying to solve, or for an area of programming it is interested in strengthening. For example, a school experiencing several behavioral issues may benefit from a team dedicated to implementing schoolwide PBIS, while a team showing progress in increased family leadership may choose to celebrate this to move toward even more progress in this area.
- Meeting **agendas** that are sent in advance and include all topics that will be discussed.
- **Predictable logistics**, including a regular location, time, date, and duration for all meetings.
- **Roles** assigned to each team member that denote their explicitly defined responsibilities, which include all tasks a given team member must perform before, during, and after meetings.
- The **authority** to enact proposed solutions to identified problems. For example, a team may need administrator approval to begin implementing a new school-wide socioemotional learning curriculum.

Figure 1. TIPS Meeting Foundations



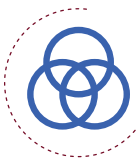
TEACH Teamwork

TEACH Teamwork is an evidence-based, self-guided program on how to work effectively in teams for school-based professionals including teachers, principals, social workers, counselors, psychologists and others (APA, 2015). It was developed via ongoing feedback from educators and vested partners from TeamSTEPPS (Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Supply), a framework to

optimize teamwork in healthcare practice for the delivery of safe patient care (Benishek et al., 2016). TEACH Teamwork aims to solve the problem of inadequate training on how to work on interdisciplinary teams effectively using five core components, known as the Big Five and detailed in Table 1 below: leadership, mutual performance monitoring, backup behavior, adaptability, and team orientation (Salas et al., 2005).

Table 1. Elements of the TEACH Teamwork

Teamwork	Definition: Ability to...
Team Leadership	• Direct and coordinate activities of team members • Assess team performance • Assign tasks • Develop team knowledge, skills, and abilities • Motivate team members • Plan and organize • Establish a positive atmosphere
Mutual Performance Monitoring	• Develop common understandings of the team environment • Apply appropriate task strategies to accurately monitor teammate performance
Backup Behavior	• Anticipate other team members' needs through accurate knowledge of responsibilities • Shift workload among teammates to balance workload pressure
Adaptability	• Adjust strategies based on information gathered from the environment through backup behavior and reallocation of intrateam resources
Team Orientation	• Ability to take others' behavior into account during group interaction and prioritizing team goals over individual team member's goals



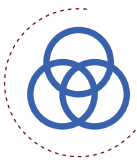
6 Conditions

The 6 Conditions for Team Effectiveness framework identifies the conditions that best support team functioning and effectiveness (Hackman & Wageman, 2009). In fact, the authors’ research suggests these six condition collectively account for 80% of the variance in how well a team performs (Wageman et al., 2005). As

detailed in Table 2 below, the framework’s six conditions are inclusive of three essentials that are the fundamental building blocks of teams, including the right people, real team, and compelling purpose, and three enablers that accelerate team development into seamless collaboration, including a sound structure, team coaching, and supportive context (6 Team Conditions, n.d.).

Table 2. Elements of the 6 Conditions

The Essentials	The Enablers
• Right People • Appropriate range of perspectives and skills • Real Team • Bounded so members know who is/is not on the team and membership is stable long enough to accomplish something meaningful • Compelling Purpose • Purpose that engages commitment and orients in a shared direction	• Sound Structure • Appropriately sized team that undertakes tasks together that make sense and establishes norms of what collaborative work looks like • Team Coaching • Expert coach helps team make use of resources • Supportive Context • The structures and systems in larger context are not obstacles to collaboration



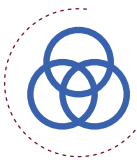
Teams That Work

Teams That Work comes from the field of industrial/organizational psychology and the study of teams from many fields in many different contexts, spanning teams that make high-stakes decisions to those in much lower-risk environments (Tannenbaum & Salas, 2020). From extensive experience and review of the literature,

Tannenbaum and Salas (2020) developed Teams That Work to focus on factors that enable teams to be effective in the long term and under less-than-favorable conditions. These factors include the seven drivers detailed in Table 3 below including capability, cooperation, coordination, communication, cognition, coaching, and conditions (Tannenbaum & Salas, 2020).

Table 3. Elements of the Teams That Work Framework

Driver	Definition
Capability	The individual and collective competencies of the team, including knowledge, skills, personality, and other personal attributes needed to overcome challenges and complete assignments.
Coordination	The behaviors or actions the team needs to demonstrate to be highly effective, including situational awareness and the ability to provide backup for or fill in for other team members.
Communication	The exchange of information both internally and externally to the team that ensures individuals have the information they need.
Cognition	The degree of shared awareness and understanding team members possess, including details such as priorities, roles, the situation, and expectations.
Coaching	Team leadership that helps members accomplish tasks and improve in their roles via clear direction, constructive feedback, and encouragement of alternative opinions.
Conditions	The environment in which the team operates, including the larger organization around it that may be enabling to or inhibitory of team effectiveness.
Cooperation	The attitudes and beliefs that team members have about their team. Cooperation is largely facilitated by the other six drivers.



Section 2: Common Elements of Empirically Supported Teaming Models

In this section, we synthesize the elements, drivers, and components of the four empirically-supported models of teaming reviewed in Section I to advance a simplified, yet comprehensive model of effective and efficient team functioning. Next, we define each common element, provide examples, and demonstrate how the elements address common teaming challenges previously identified. The five common elements identified in our synthesis and detailed below include (a) purpose; (b) team membership and authority; (c) team member roles and responsibilities; (d) coordination, communication, and consistency; and (e) coaching.

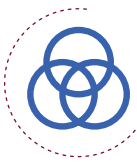
Purpose

For teams to succeed, they must have a clear purpose that is shared among all team members. There are several reasons a purpose can be beneficial for successful teaming. First, it communicates why the team exists: what are the gaps the team needs to fill, and what problems does it seek to solve? By answering these questions, a plainly stated purpose helps teams set specific goals that drive systematic action, thereby increasing team efficiency. In this way, having a clear purpose from which all goals are derived partly addresses the common issue of goal ambiguity. For example, the purpose of Tier 1 teams in schools implementing PBIS may be to improve and maintain a positive school culture and climate with subsequent goals created to implement school-wide strategies that meet the social-emotional-behavioral (SEB) health and wellness of all students and staff, reduce

discipline disproportionality, and improve school-family partnerships.

Similarly, a clear purpose can also mitigate redundancy in teaming. Within a single school, there are often multiple teams that address similar challenges or initiatives. For example, a school might have a school safety team, a threat-assessment team, and a crisis response team. If each team is required to have a defined purpose, redundancy will be more obvious and administrators will be able to optimize the number of teams (e.g., combining those with overlapping responsibilities) for maximum efficiency. Defining the purpose of each team will also help teams with a similar purpose collaborate, coordinate, and communicate with one another. In the example provided, all the teams mentioned have the similar purpose of addressing safety and security thus identifying overlapping goals and responsibilities will help leaders determine how to (1) combine and reduce teams in a way that optimizes their efficiency, and (2) manage communication and collaboration between remaining teams so gaps don't emerge or redundancies reappear.

For schools implementing PBIS, they will want to consider if they have teams and/or initiatives with overlapping purposes, such as addressing school climate, students' social-emotional competency, or trauma-informed care. These teams, which often include many of the same team members, could be combined into one team which has the priority of addressing SEB health across all tiers of programming. Using a tool such as the Initiative Inventory, which provides specific guidance on how to align and



integrate these related initiatives, can be useful. For example, using the support of a coach, a school reviewed teams across initiatives and decided to combine their PBIS Tier 2 team, student assistance team, and child study team into one advanced tier team. As leaders examine existing teams, initiatives, and priorities, combining teams with similar priorities can create efficiency and is more likely to lead to improved effectiveness and satisfaction with teaming. To that end, it is crucial that a team's purpose is known not only to individual members but is also accessible to all others in the school community.

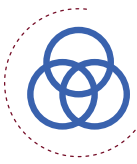
Finally, having clear purpose is crucial towards motivating team members and ensuring their investment in team activities. It is not uncommon for team members to be asked to complete logistical tasks that may appear dull or inconsequential (e.g., scheduling meetings, filing paperwork, collecting data); however, reframing these responsibilities as crucial steps towards the team's overall purpose (rather than merely day-to-day minutia) may improve member morale and encourage timely task completion. Moreover, a compelling purpose that motivates team member buy-in may reduce the frequency with which teams encounter opposing goals. For that reason, a team's purpose must be both clear and compelling. Additionally, there have been many research studies to demonstrate the effectiveness of PBIS to improve student outcomes (Bradshaw et al., 2012; Waasdorp et al., 2012); improve teacher outcomes (Ross et al., 2012); and reduce exclusionary discipline (McIntosh et al., 2021). Sharing this compelling evidence-base with staff, families, and students can increase the collective

commitment of teams to complete the tasks related to the teaming process.

Team Membership and Authority

With a defined purpose, teams also need their membership defined, including members from administration to both legitimize the team's importance and provide decision making authority. Most teams related to MTSS and PBIS implementation are bounded and stable, meaning their membership stays the same, the team and all in the school community know consistently who is and is not on the team, and that consistency ensures meaningful work can be accomplished across the school year. It is essential that the membership of any MTSS or PBIS team includes the right people with a wide array of skill sets, expertise, and responsibilities tailored to meet the goals and work the team was formed to achieve.

For example, when forming a Tier 1 PBIS team, school administrators must ensure appropriate and diverse expertise is represented on the team (e.g., classroom teacher, mental health professional, family members, students), perspectives from historically marginalized subgroups (i.e., individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, individuals who identify as LGBTQ+), as well as relevant responsibilities and authority in the organization (e.g., coaches, community partners, behavioral support staff, administrators). This ensures a diverse and appropriate range of perspectives is represented during team conversations and decisions, and that the right personnel are in position to execute team decisions between meetings. It is also important



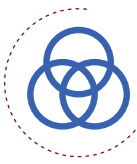
for administrators to explicitly specify the role of each team member, the expertise they contribute to the team, and their time commitment to the team. This is discussed in more detail in the next section regarding team member roles and responsibilities and, coupled with representation of diverse perspectives and skillsets, often helps address the common issue of inefficient distribution of responsibilities among team members, such as task redundancy.

Finally, it is critical that at least one administrator be a regular and active member of the team. As discussed in the TIPS framework, administrators bring both resources and decision-making power to school teams. Lacking these, teams will often be unable to implement planned solutions efficiently and effectively. Thus, although another team member should be responsible for directing the team's daily activities and managing logistics (described in next section), administrative authority is also required within the team membership to enact change, make decisions about policy and resource allocation, and provide support and validation to the team's solution(s). For Tier 1 PBIS teams implementing with fidelity, membership includes a school administrator, system coaches/coordinators, a representative group of educators, students, family members, relevant community partners, and members from marginalized groups. There should also be expertise in applied behavior support, mental health and trauma, academic instruction, coaching, equity, physical health and wellness, data and information systems, and operations of the school across grade levels amongst the team members.

Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure team members operate as efficiently and effectively as possible, it is important they have defined roles with associated responsibilities. Linking roles with responsibilities in this way helps ensure that members are able to meet required expectations before, during, at the conclusion of, and between team meetings. The specific roles within a given team may vary based on its needs and purpose but, regardless of the roles selected, they must be explicitly delineated to protect against redundancy and frustration if unspecified expectations are not met.

Moreover, the appropriate assignment of roles and responsibilities has the potential to mitigate the challenge of trust issues. For example, if a team member is repeatedly given responsibilities they do not have the requisite skills to accomplish, they may lose faith in the team's leadership and in themselves. Other members may also begin to distrust or doubt them and their competence. By ensuring the individual assigned to a given role has the skills necessary to fulfill that role's associated responsibilities, this problem can be circumvented. Finally, every team member should know the primary role and general responsibilities of the others. This is necessary for within-team collaboration and establishment of efficient workflows. For example, if any team member needs extra assistance or is absent (e.g., for family or medical leave), it is important for the person providing coverage to understand the additional responsibilities they may be asked to fulfill. This shared understanding may help avoid delays and setbacks that would otherwise occur in the team member's absence.



For schools implementing PBIS, there are defined roles and responsibilities to ensure the process is implemented with fidelity, with the goal of improved outcomes for students. In this section, key roles in PBIS teams are described, as well as the responsibilities for each role. Table 4 gives examples of tasks for before, during, and after team meetings matched to specific roles to clearly indicate how well functioning teams operate.

FACILITATOR

Facilitators are charged with overseeing and managing the team's workflow before, during, after, and between team meetings. The person filling this role runs each team meeting, determines goals of the team and team meetings, and delegates responsibilities to ensure tasks are completed as efficiently as possible. They should also periodically review team performance and provide constructive feedback to other team members as needed. It is also important to note that the team facilitator need not have administrative authority and separating the roles of team facilitator and school administrator is often ideal. School administrators often do not have time to complete the before and after team meeting responsibilities required of the team facilitator and may have to multi-task during a team meeting if any crisis occurs.

Effective team facilitators establish consistent teaming norms (described further in next section), data-based decision making practices, and communication systems. For example, a team facilitator should guide the data-based decision making process during the team meeting, redirecting the team to the data and the

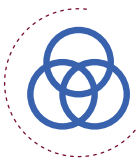
process as needed. The team facilitator should make this practice consistent during each team meeting so that team meetings are predictable, stay focused, use time and resources effectively and efficiently, and mitigate against gaps in decision making that may cause action to be stalled or ineffective. The facilitator would also establish common meeting practices such as regular meeting times, resources available during team meetings (e.g., computer access, display screens), and evaluating performance at each meeting's conclusion.

MINUTE TAKER

The team minute taker listens to the discussion throughout the meeting and summarizes critical information in written form. If there is a specific agenda format that is being used (e.g., TIPS form, a shared spreadsheet), the minute taker will need to be fluent in the form or application being used. If technology is being used, such as a shared notes space in an online platform (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Google Documents), the person in this role should also be fluent in the use of the technology. Written and verbal communication skills are important in this role, as it is the responsibility of the minute taker to ensure a shared understanding by all team members of what is being documented. For example, if a team member misses a meeting, they should be able to review the notes and have both a sense of the discussion, as well as any decisions or action steps that were determined.

DATA ANALYST

This person is able to collect, synthesize, and report out various data for the team. They are fluent in



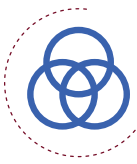
various data and information systems that are available and can aggregate/disaggregate data for team-based decision making. For example, most schoolwide PBIS teams examine office discipline referrals (ODRs), attendance, grades, and time out of class (nurse visits, counselor visits). It is possible that different databases are used for these types of data and the data analyst must be fluent in accessing and navigating each of them. The data analyst might also develop a spreadsheet capable of linking data from the different systems based on student ID so team members can see all data in one location.

In addition to accessing data from different sources, the data analyst should also be able to review and organize the data in advance of a team meeting to guide the decision making as efficiently as possible. Capacity for aggregating data at multiple levels (e.g., classroom, grade) and disaggregating (e.g., race/ethnicity, classroom vs non-classroom settings), as well

as summarizing data points across multiple sources (e.g., ODRs, mental health screening scores, absences, test scores), is important for this role.

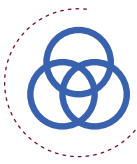
ADMINISTRATOR

A principal or designee within the school is needed to provide authority over decision making. When an administrator actively participates in team meetings, they are demonstrating to the team that they are in support of the team's efforts and prioritizing the action items and goals the team is addressing. Administrators can also communicate successes and challenges to the district leadership, creating a continuous feedback loop regarding staff and student progress, and with the entire school regarding applicable decisions made by the team. Being a participating member of the team supports the team's efficiency by providing authority to make certain decisions allocating resources or changing policy in real-time during the meeting.



**Table 4. Roles and Responsibilities of PBIS Team Members
Before, During, and After Team Meetings**

Role	Before	During	After
Facilitator	Using previous meeting minutes - Remind team member about action plans and task timelines. - Prepare agenda for next meeting.	- Ask questions that led to buy-in. - Encourage participation. - Ask questions that led to effective solutions. - Acknowledge practice of group agreements. - Ask more questions than answering questions. - Refer to Decision Guidelines.	Using meeting minutes - Determine who you need to follow up with before the next meeting. - What tasks do you have? - What reports do you expect from the Data Analyst?
Minute Taker	Review previous meeting minutes and prepare current meeting minutes. - Check last meeting's minutes to create the agenda for the upcoming meeting. - Check in with the facilitator and data analyst to make sure the agenda is appropriate.	Record decisions in meeting minutes. - Highlight the key points. - Don't hesitate to ask the group for more information to record all the features of the precision statement. - Follow up on any items that are unclear. - Don't worry about typos, you can always go back at the end of the meeting to clean up the notes. - Document precision statements in the minutes (who, what, when, where, why, how).	Clean up meeting minutes to ensure accuracy and post meeting minutes. - Go back and edit any details for accuracy. - Work with your team to decide if they'd like the meeting minutes emailed out to the group. - Post a PDF of the meeting minutes in a shared and secure folder. - Aim to share the meeting minutes within 24 hours of the meeting. - Sharing the minutes on the same day is best practice.
Data Analyst	Prepare data summaries used to jump start the decision making from the following sources, - Previous meeting minutes - Intervention and Systems progress and fidelity - Student Intervention progress and fidelity - Data calendar (e.g., screening data available November 1) - Student nomination and Requests for Assistance (check in with the meeting facilitator for these)	- Share a quick summary/synthesis of the data. - Review precision statement for discussion and decision making. - Take back any data queries to gather any additional information needed.	Review action items and complete any assigned tasks.



Role	Before	During	After
Administrator	• Check in with facilitator regarding the agenda and anything that needs included. • Ensure accurate and current data entry.	• Make administrative decisions as needed. • Provide encouragement and validation to team's accomplishments and challenges.	• Ensure decisions and assigned action items are completed. • Communicate relevant information to various stakeholder groups (e.g., district leaders and staff, school staff, families and students). • Review assigned tasks and timelines.
Team Member	• Complete any assigned tasks or action items. • Notify facilitator and back up if unable to attend meeting.	• Actively participate and adhere to meeting norms. • Ask questions and seek clarification as needed. • Collaborate on ideas and data-based decision making process.	• Review assigned tasks and timelines.

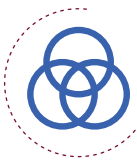
Coordination, Communication, and Consistency

Effective team facilitators ensure their teams operate with predictable logistics and have shared decision making norms in order to enable members' shared understanding of team goals and activities. For example, as described in the TIPS framework, teams that need to meet frequently should not schedule each meeting individually. Rather, multiple reoccurring meetings should be planned in advance for the same time, length, and location. Thus, a team might plan to meet every Monday at 2:00 P.M. in the media center conference room. This consistency in logistics facilitates reliable team member attendance and may be especially important given the common challenge of team member isolation. Several key team members may frequently be off-campus due to the itinerant nature of their job responsibilities (e.g., staffing specialists and school psychologists both typically

serve multiple schools within the same district).

Thus, using consistent logistics that accommodate all members' schedules may decrease isolation and promote team cohesion.

During meetings, teams should also use consistent norms to guide collaboration. By defining such norms, teams can better avoid interpersonal conflict and establish more efficient workflows. In this way, consistency addresses the common issue of opposing goals. Consistent decision making norms can be used to facilitate compromise and ensure all team members feel heard and represented, even in the face of initial disagreement. In fact, when opposing viewpoints are expressed in a collaborative, supportive environment, team members may find goals that initially seemed disparate may, in fact, be able to work in tandem. Thus, consistent decision making norms enable members to work through disagreements in a process that may ultimately benefit the team's purpose



overall. Further, team leaders should be willing to assertively and respectfully communicate with team members when they notice a consistent issue (e.g., frequently late or missing meetings, sidetracking, being excessively negative). Relatedly, team leaders should be supportive and reinforcing of team efforts and build in opportunities to celebrate team successes.

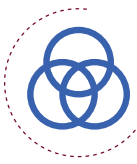
PBIS teams implementing with fidelity also focus on these common elements: (a) regular meeting format/agenda that prompts the regular review of data, systems and practices, (b) minutes available to all staff for review, (c) established and regularly used team norms, (d) defined meeting roles (e.g., timekeeper, facilitator, recorder), (e) regular (e.g., quarterly) two-way data sharing and communication with related teams, such as teams managing advanced tiers of intervention, (f) a current action plan, (g) procedure for evaluating fidelity of team operating procedures, and (h) a formal process to monitor the impact of team norms and procedures on ensuring all team members are able to participate as equal partners.

In order to appropriately assign tasks and accomplish goals, teams must have effective communication. Information exchange should, like all other aspects of teaming, be as consistent as possible by adhering to predictable, logical workflows. Having an accessible agenda prepared prior to all team meetings is but one example of this from the TIPS framework and a component of PBIS implementation fidelity. Agendas should be shared with all team members in advance of each meeting and should highlight key areas for decision making. Because the agenda is shared ahead of time, team members can ensure the issues they

would like to discuss are included. This advanced planning helps aid efficiency and provides additional structure to meetings.

Meeting minutes are also useful towards documenting team decisions and improving the clarity of team goals. Minutes should be taken by a designated team member and should include all topics of discussion (as outlined in the agenda). Goals, associated tasks, the team member(s) assigned to those tasks, and task due dates should all be highlighted in the minutes and reviewed before the meeting is concluded. Once finalized, minutes should be sent to all team members. This not only helps reduce the common challenge of goal ambiguity but may also mitigate team member isolation by (a) ensuring all members are aware of who is assigned to outstanding tasks, thereby enabling more efficient collaboration and (b) providing an easily accessible summary of meeting topics for members who were unable to attend.

Finally, mutual support should be both actively sought and offered among team members. This could include assisting a fellow team member with one of their designated tasks, being flexible when goals change, and providing and receiving constructive feedback in a positive manner. Mutual support ultimately helps increase team efficiency by ensuring gaps are filled as they arise and by helping members feel invested in the team's success. In the TIPS framework, each team member's role has a designated backup familiar with the position's responsibilities before, during, after, and between team meetings to keep the team's work advancing if a gap in the primary team member's involvement occurs (e.g., as before medical or family



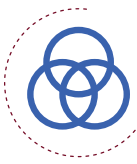
leave). Mutual support also promotes creativity in decision making by making team meetings a safe place in which members can propose novel solutions or critique the team's functioning without fear of pushback. This may also decrease the likelihood of trust issues arising between team members. Finally, mutual support interacts with consistent problem-solving norms to facilitate effective compromise when team members generate opposing goals.

Coaching

The environment and context in which an individual team is situated in a school community must also be supportive of the team's goals and activities. This means that the school system should not create additional obstacles for the team to overcome but should actively seek to remove barriers and facilitate solutions (e.g., protecting team meeting time from other duties). Providing resources to the team also supports their work and functioning. For example, providing a district-level coach to school teams keeps the school team connected to external resources,

helps them balance workload, promotes adaptability when priorities change or are modified in the system, and provides ongoing assessment of team functioning and performance to maintain collaboration and team effectiveness.

A district level coach, who has dedicated time (FTE – full time equivalent) to support school-level teams promotes successful implementation of the recommended strategies. Coaches often show up for school team meetings, ensure they aren't canceled, and are able to support the “before, during, and after” tasks of each team member role. An experienced coach assesses the fluency and capacity of a school team to determine the level of support it will need. For example, a newly formed team with minimal training may need a coach to model all aspects of the team meeting, train in tasks between team meetings (e.g., data system access, preparing agendas), provide resources for data-based decision making (e.g., resource mapping), and help organize and interpret data.



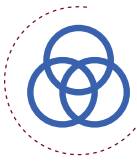
Conclusion

The practice of teaming in schools has gained widespread popularity across various types of teams and research suggests a positive association between teaming in schools and increased student attendance, academic achievement, and decreased levels of student misconduct (Sims et al., 2023). The ubiquity of teaming is particularly evident in Multi-Tiered System of Supports, like PBIS, RtI, and the ISF. However, despite its popularity and positive outcomes, there is often insufficient attention given to the implementation of teaming in educational practices. Challenges faced by school teams include ineffective leadership, disruptive team members, competing demands, and difficulties in organizing, planning, and implementing supportive programs. The challenges are further heightened when implementing a MTSS, requiring coordination across various teams and efficient organization of tasks. In this guide, the review and synthesis of several empirically supported frameworks for effective teaming identified five common elements that drive team success, including purpose, team membership and authority, team member roles and responsibilities, coordination, communication, and consistency, and coaching. The guide provides a comprehensive model to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of team functioning in schools.



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