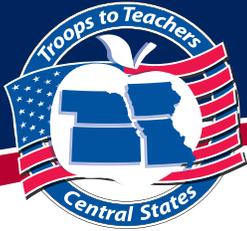


TROOPS TO TEACHERS



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Happy Holidays

A SOLUTION TO BEHAVIOR CHALLENGES: SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT - PART 1

By Jan S. Weiner, Ph.D. and Belinda Dunnick Karge, Ph.D. California State University, Fullerton

Problem behavior in students in public schools is reported by teachers as being the highest priority issue impacting teachers' effectiveness and impacting the success of their students. Principals report that these challenges lead to high incidents of referrals, suspensions, expulsions, and ultimately high drop out rates (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2011). Families become disheartened and disillusioned. Further, students with disabilities that exhibit the most challenging behaviors are often excluded and segregated due to their behavior, and therefore miss out on making friends and gaining valuable academic content. Traditional behavior management strategies that often create punitive measures are ineffective and often exacerbate the problems and lead to further challenges.

A solution that has been in effect for almost 25 years now, takes a far more proactive approach to behavior problems and establishes a safe environment where learning can take place (Chitiyo, May, & Chitiyo, 2012). School Wide Positive Behavior Support, also referred to as SWPBIS, has demonstrated a 100% reduction in principal referrals, suspensions, expulsions (McIntosh, Campbell, Carter, & Zumbo, 2009), and a marked reduction in bullying when implemented on school campuses across the country (<https://www.pbis.org/school/bully-prevention>). Furthermore, test scores have increased dramatically.

Teachers report much higher satisfaction and efficacy, and need to spend less time with behavior issues. This proactive action planning addresses behaviors that may impede learning and the student's least restrictive placement for students with and without disabilities (Browning Wright, 2012).

What is School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBIS)?

SWPBIS is a proactive educational set of strategies that, when implemented consistently and embraced philosophically as a campus, effectively prevents challenging behavior from occurring by creating a positive school environment. SWPBIS is designed to promote valued behavioral expectations for all students that actively reinforce and encourage positive behavior at a high frequency everyday (Algozzine & Algozzine, 2007).

Organized in a three-tiered approach, behavior expectations are directly taught to all the students on campus in the same manner as core standard curriculum. Universal supports for all students, including teaching behavior expectations and implementing interventions are paramount to Tier 1. When students are unresponsive to instruction Tier 2 provides small group supports (Shepherd & Linn, 2015). Tier 3 provides individualized functional assessment to those

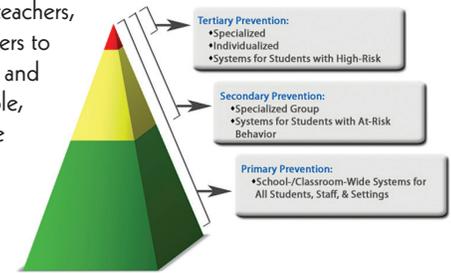
students who continue to struggle and need more intensive alterations to their school environment (Sailor, Dunlap, Sugai, & Horner, 2009).

Behavior expectations are first prearranged in a philosophical statement determined by a small team of teachers, parents, administrators, and others to define three to five core beliefs and goals of the campus. For example, one campus decided to use the 3-Bees as their campus logo to represent their behavior

goals: Bee Respectful, Bee Responsible, Bee Safe. What is critical and significant is the next step in this process: teachers must then break down these beliefs or goals into do-able, measurable, comprehensible behaviors for the students so that when asked, "What does being respectful mean?" Any child on the campus can list the behaviors required in order to be respectful. For example, one school listed these behaviors representing being respectful:

- Raise your hand to speak
- Hold the door for someone when they are coming through
- Allow someone a turn at recess
- Throw trash in a garbage can
- Help a friend who is struggling with their work

Notice a critical feature of this approach is that each example is stated in positive terms. Rather than indicating what the student is NOT supposed to do, SWPBIS emphasizes what the expectation IS. Rather than saying, "Don't run in the halls," the expectation is to "Walk in the halls." In other words, turn the NO into KNOW. The obvious key feature then is that students must be reinforced for following the expectations. This is a paradigm shift from traditional methods, which emphasize and attempt to punish the alternatives. It is up to each campus to design the reinforcer system. An example on one campus is "Gotcha Tickets." When a student demonstrates an expected behavior, a teacher or peer serves them with a "Gotcha Ticket." Similarly another school used "Value Bucks." These can then be delivered to their classroom ticket jar. When enough tickets are accumulated, the winning classroom gets to go out to lunch with the principal or have a special day out.





REDUCED TUITION RATES FOR MILITARY STUDENTS & VETERANS

STARTING JANUARY 2015

SLU

FOR BUSY ADULTS

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCES REDUCED TUITION RATE FOR MILITARY STUDENTS

Service members can now earn a bachelor's degree from SLU at a reduced rate from the School for Professional Studies.

Saint Louis University recently approved an unprecedented, reduced tuition rate of \$400 per credit hour for active military and veterans using Tuition Assistance or GI Bill Benefits. This rate is offered for both new and current undergraduate students pursuing bachelor's degrees or certificates through the School for Professional Studies.

The rate will go into effect for the spring term that begins January 12, 2015, however military students can begin submitting their applications now for admission to the University.

SLU for Busy Adults is committed to providing a quality, Jesuit education that meets the needs of military service members, veterans and professionals by: offering flexible schedules and terms that start every 8 weeks designing classes in a convenient online format so you can earn college credit from anywhere in the world lowering tuition rates to make earning a degree from Saint Louis University affordable.

Saint Louis University is a participant in the Yellow Ribbon Program and is ranked #20 on the list of "Best Colleges for Veterans" for National Universities by US News and World Report.

The University articulates prior learning and accepts transfer credits through the American Council of Education (ACE) and the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) to give students credit for military training and service thus shortening their overall time to degree completion.

The School for Professional Studies offers more than 20 fully online degree programs designed with the schedules of busy, working adults in mind. Attractive programs for service members include Computer Information Systems, Security & Strategic Intelligence (new in 2015), RN to BSN and Contract Management.

For more information on special tuition rates for active duty and veteran students email sps@slu.edu or call (314) 977-2330 or (800) 734-6736.

<http://www.slu.edu/school-for-professional-studies-home/reduced-tuition-for-military>

STATE TEACHER JOB VACANCY SITES

Looking for a new job? These are some links that may prove useful for finding certified and substitute teaching jobs. For a more complete listing go to our website:

WWW.TROOPSTOTEACHERS.MO.GOV

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IA: <http://www.iowaeducationjobs.com/>

NE: <http://www.nebraskaeducationjobs.com/>

KS: <http://www.kansasteachingjobs.com/>

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TROOPS TO TEACHERS MENTORS

We are pleased to have a list of mentors on our web site. These people have successfully been through the process from start to finish. They are offering their thoughts, insights, and encouragement to others pursuing their goals of becoming teachers.

WANT TO BECOME A MENTOR?

The advice and guidance you will provide is invaluable to fellow veterans interested in starting careers as K-12 public school teachers.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO BE A MENTOR?

Visit: DESE.TroopsToTeachers@DESE.mo.gov or

click here to join us: <http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/TTT-MENTOR%20CONNECTION-%2006-14>

THE NATIONAL TROOPS TO TEACHERS WEBSITE IS LOCATED AT WWW.PROUDTOSERVEAGAIN.COM

VETERAN'S EDUCATION & TRAINING SECTION

MISSOURI STATE APPROVING AGENCY



POST-9/11 GI BILL

If you have at least 90 days of aggregate active duty service after Sept. 10, 2001, and are still on active duty, or if you are an honorably discharged Veteran or were discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days, you may be eligible for this VA-administered program. You can also review the program pamphlet.

If you have eligibility for the Post-9/11 GI Bill and any other GI Bill program you must make an irrevocable election of the Post-9/11 GI Bill before you can receive any benefits. For more information see our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

The Post-9/11 GI Bill has a few specific components that are unavailable in other GI Bill programs:

- Yellow Ribbon Program
- Transfer of Entitlement Option

Types of Training - The following assistance is approved under the Post-9/11 GI Bill:

- Correspondence training
- Entrepreneurship training
- Flight training
- Independent and distance learning
- National testing reimbursement
- Institutions of higher learning undergraduate and graduate degrees
- Vocational/technical training, non-college degree programs
- Vocational/technical training
- Tutorial assistance
- On-the-job training
- Tuition Assistance top-up
- Licensing and certification reimbursement

Benefits and Eligibility

For approved programs, the Post-9/11 GI Bill provides up to 36 months of education benefits, generally payable for 15 years following your release from active duty. Institutions of higher learning participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program may make additional funds available for your education program without an additional charge to your GI Bill entitlement. The following payments may also be available:

- Monthly housing allowance
- One-time rural benefit payment
- Annual books and supplies stipend

To see the current payment rates for the Post-9/11 GI Bill click here.

Some Servicemembers may also transfer unused GI Bill benefits to their dependents.

Other Factors to Consider

- Full tuition and fees are paid directly to the school for all public school in-state students.
- For those attending private or foreign schools, tuition and fees are capped at the national maximum rate.

Learn More

- If you're attending a private or a public institution of higher learning (either private or public) as a nonresident, out-of-state student you may be eligible for the Yellow Ribbon Program and entitled to additional education-related costs not covered by VA. Not everyone is eligible for this assistance.



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CLICK HERE FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIAL TRAINING & INFORMATION RESOURCES

or go to: http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_training_resources.asp



Happy Holidays & Merry Christmas to All

'Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone, In a one bedroom house made of plaster & stone. I had come down the chimney with presents to give, And to see just who in this home did live. I looked all about a strange sight I did see, No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree. No stocking by the fire, just boots filled with sand, On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands. With medals and badges, awards of all kind, A sober thought came through my mind. For this house was different, so dark and dreary, I knew I had found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly. I heard stories about them, I had to see more, So I walked down the hall and pushed open the door. And there he lay sleeping silent alone, Curled up on the floor in his one bedroom home. His face so gentle, his room in such disorder, Not how I pictured a United States soldier. Was this the hero of whom I'd just read? Curled up in his poncho, a floor for his bed? His head was clean shaven, his weathered face tan, I soon understood this was more than a man. For I realized the families that I saw that night, Owed their lives to these men who were willing to fight. Soon 'round the world, the children would play, And grownups would celebrate on a bright Christmas day. They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year, Because of soldiers like this one lying here. I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone, On a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home. Just the very thought brought a tear to my eye, I dropped to my knees and started to cry. The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice, "Santa don't cry, this life is my choice; I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more, My life is my God, my country, my Corps." With that he rolled over and drifted off into sleep, I couldn't control it, I continued to weep. I watched him for hours, so silent and still, I noticed he shivered from the cold night's chill. So I took off my jacket, the one made of red, And I covered this Soldier from his toes to his head. And I put on his T-shirt of gray and black, With an eagle and an Army patch embroidered on back. And although it barely fit me, I began to swell with pride, And for a shining moment, I was United States Army deep inside. I didn't want to leave him on that cold dark night, This guardian of honor so willing to fight. Then the soldier rolled over, whispered with a voice so clean and pure, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas day, all is secure." One look at my watch, and I knew he was right, Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night!

From The Central States Troops To Teachers Program & The MO Veterans Education & Training Section

WHAT IS THE STORY BEHIND THIS POEM?

James M. Schmidt, was a Lance Corporal stationed in Washington, D.C., when he wrote the poem back in 1986. In an interview in December 2002, Corporal Schmidt said, "The true story is that while a Lance Corporal serving as Battalion Counter Sniper at the Marine Barracks 8th & I, Washington, DC, under Commandant P.X. Kelly and Battalion Commander D.J. Myers [in 1986], I wrote this poem to hang on the door of the Gym in the BEQ. When Colonel Myers came upon it, he read it and immediately had copies sent to each department at the Barracks and promptly dismissed the entire Battalion early for Christmas leave. The poem was placed that day in the Marine Corps Gazette, distributed worldwide and later submitted to Leatherneck Magazine".

A dedicated toll-free hotline is now available **FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS (SCOS) ONLY.**

Toll-free hotline number 1 (855) 225.1159

The hotline is available from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, Central Time. SCOs must provide the school's facility code and be listed as a designated VA school certifying official to receive assistance through the dedicated hotline.

TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VETERANS EDUCATION AND TRAINING BENEFITS, OR TO SEE HOW MUCH YOUR ENTITLEMENT IS, CALL 888.442.4551.



SWEET DREAMS PILLOW

The Sweet Dream Picture Pillows are available to the children of any family whose father or mother is on active duty and will be absent from their family for at least three months.

Visit our website at:

<http://www.pillowprojectusa.com>

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER This newsletter is being e-mailed to one person at each school. Please share this newsletter with all other Certifying Officials, Education officers, Unit Commanders and personnel, the Bursar's or Comptroller's Office, Human Relations office, Financial Aid Office and other interested individuals at your school/business/Unit.

It is extremely important that the information in this newsletter receives the widest dissemination in order that veterans receive the GI Bill and other educational benefits to which they are entitled. If you are reading this, email: john.parker@dese.mo.gov to receive a gift.



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Jefferson State Office Building, Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act) 205 Jefferson Street, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480p: 573.526.4757 or Relay Missouri p: 800.735.2966.

KANSAS

MCPHERSON SUPERINTENDENT NAMED KANSAS COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION - Nov. 13, 2014

TOPEKA – Following a nationwide search, the Kansas State Board of Education today announced its selection of Dr. Randy Watson, Superintendent of McPherson Unified School District 418, to become Kansas' next Commissioner of Education. Watson replaces Dr. Diane DeBacker who resigned her position earlier this year to serve as senior advisor to the Director General of the Abu Dhabi Education Council.

Dr. Watson, who was recently named 2015 Kansas Superintendent of the Year by the Kansas School Superintendents Association, brings more than 30 years of Kansas education experience to the position, having served as a high school social studies teacher in Andover and Tescott, and assistant principal, principal and superintendent in the McPherson district. He holds a Bachelor of Science, History; Master of Science, Educational Administration; and Doctor of Education from Kansas State University. Under his leadership, the McPherson district was the first to receive a federal waiver from No Child Left Behind education law and gained statewide recognition for the development of its C3 – Citizenship, College and Career Ready plan – a clear articulation of the district's goals for every student and a prescribed plan to achieve them.

"Randy is a true visionary who will bring innovative leadership to Kansas' public education," said KSBE Chairwoman Jana Shaver. "He has earned the respect of educators and education agencies throughout Kansas because of his innovative thinking and relentless pursuit of excellence in education. We believe he has what it takes to not only continue the great work of Kansas, but to inspire our schools to reach the next level."

This past spring, Dr. Watson was instrumental in gaining approval for McPherson to become one of the first districts awarded innovative district status, a state program providing exemptions from most state laws, and rules and regulations in order to improve student achievement. Shortly thereafter, he was named Chairman of the Coalition of Innovative School Districts. Dr. Watson served as the 2013 President of the Kansas Association of School Superintendents and the 2010 Chair of the Council of Superintendents, and is a current member of the Kansas/Missouri Superintendent Forum Board of Directors. Dr. Watson and his wife Debbie currently live in McPherson. They have two children, daughter Melissa and son Phillip.

<http://www.ksde.org/Home/QuickLinks/NewsRoom/tabid/586/aid/77/Default.aspx>

More information about educator preparation in Kansas can found at www.ksde.org

NEBRASKA

NEBRASKA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE HITS RECORD HIGH, NEARLY REACHING STATE GOAL OF 90%

Nebraska public schools graduated nearly 90 percent of their high school seniors in 2014, increasing the percentage of graduates to 89.7 percent, up from 88.5 percent in 2013. The public school graduation rate has steadily improved since 2011 when 86.1 percent of the high school seniors graduated in four years.

Year*	4- Year Graduation Rate	# Graduates
2011	86.12 %	19,313
2012	87.63 %	19,317
2013	88.49 %	19,389
2014	89.68 %	19,500

*As required by the U.S. Department of Education, Nebraska began reporting graduation rates by the Four-Year Cohort method in 2011. "Nebraska public schools set a new all-time high graduation rate this year, in effect, reaching the state goal," Nebraska Education Commissioner Matt Blomstedt said, commenting on new 2014 data released today by the Nebraska Department of Education. Blomstedt also noted that the state's six-year graduation rate topped the state goal with 91.1 percent of all high school seniors graduating within six years. "The bottom line: Nebraska schools don't give up on their students," Blomstedt said. "Nebraska teachers and administrators work hard to keep all students in school and to get them to graduation despite the academic struggles and difficult and challenging circumstances some students face daily." The 2014 six-year graduation rate improved from nearly 89.7 percent to 91.1 percent or 20,137 high school seniors graduating in six years. For the first time this year, school districts that graduated 100 percent of their seniors also were named. In 2014, 65 Nebraska school districts graduated 100 percent of their seniors in four years and 69 districts graduated all seniors in six years. In the past, Nebraska has not provided results when all students were included in a single category to further protect the privacy of individual students. The new graduation data as well as dropout rates have been added to the State of the Schools Report and are available at: <http://www.education.ne.gov/> or <http://reportcard.education.ne.gov>.

More information about educator preparation in Nebraska can found at www.education.ne.gov/tcert





IOWA

FIVE IOWA SCHOOLS HONORED FOR BREAKING EDUCATION BARRIERS - Nov. 19, 2014

Five schools from Iowa were honored by the State Board of Education today for their work to raise achievement among students who face challenges in the classroom. The "Breaking Barriers to Teaching & Learning Award" was created by the State Board of Education. Each year, the award recognizes successful efforts to eliminate gaps in achievement among students. This year's award-winners were recognized for having the highest proficiency rates statewide in math & reading among a specific subgroup of students, such as students who do not speak English as their native language & students from low-income backgrounds. **The schools that met this criteria are:**

- **Cedar Falls High School**, Cedar Falls Community School District: Recognized for its work with African American students. 78 percent of the school's African American students are proficient in math and reading, compared to a statewide average of only 52 percent.
- **Davis Elementary School**, Grinnell-Newburg Community School District: Recognized for its work with students on Individualized Education Programs, or IEPs. The proficiency rate for Davis Elementary students on IEPs is 82 percent in reading and math, a statewide average of 43 percent.
- **Hillside Elementary School**, West Des Moines Community School District: Recognized for its work with English language learners, or ELL. The proficiency rate for Hillside's ELL students is 70 percent in reading and math. That compares to a statewide average of 49 percent for the same group of students.
- **Riverdale Heights Elementary School**, Pleasant Valley Community School District: Honored for its work with Latino students. 98 percent of Latino students are proficient in reading and math, compared to the statewide average of 62 percent.
- **Southeast Elementary School**, Waverly-Shell Rock Community School District: Recognized for its work with students who come from low-income families. With a third of the school's student population qualifying for free and reduced-price lunches, 98 percent of those children are proficient in reading and math. The statewide average is 65 percent.

Interviews with school principals revealed a common thread between the honored schools: the use of evidence-based practices, a staff-wide commitment, high expectations and substantial teacher collaboration. Reducing the achievement gap is one of the State Board of Education's top priorities.



<https://www.educateiowa.gov/article/2014/11/19/five-iowa-schools-honored-breaking-education-barriers>

More information about educator preparation in Iowa can found at <http://educateiowa.gov/>

MISSOURI

PUT MISSOURI IN THE TOP 10 IN EDUCATION



Missouri Education Commissioner reminds us of what should be our ultimate goal. Thank you and hats off to Commissioner Nicastro as she retires and moves on to other endeavors.

As the debate over Missouri educational standards dominates headlines, one might lose sight of the ultimate goal of education - to give our students the knowledge and skills they need for success in life. We've been doing a pretty good job of that in Missouri, but we could reach much higher. In fact, one of my proudest accomplishments as commissioner of education is the development of the Top 10 by 20 initiative, an ambitious plan to raise student achievement across Missouri to rank among the top 10 states by 2020.

The initiative has three primary goals:

1. All Missouri students will graduate college- and career-ready.

Currently, a third of Missouri graduates require remediation upon entering college, costing Missouri's families a fortune in college classes that earn no credit. Missouri's public schools continue to take achievement seriously and are working hard to ensure all students are prepared to succeed.

2. All Missouri children will enter kindergarten prepared to be successful in school.

High-quality early childhood education makes children more successful in the classroom, and the benefits affect their entire lives. In Missouri, every 3- and 4-year-old child should have quality learning opportunities at home or in a formal setting.

3. Missouri will prepare, develop and support effective educators.

The success of the Top 10 by 20 initiative will depend on classroom teachers and school leaders. Missouri has updated and strengthened educator preparation and the evaluation system standards to help ensure that each classroom has a highly effective teacher, and each school a highly effective leader. I believe Missouri can rank among the top 10 states by 2020. We are already making progress with higher ACT scores, increased graduation rates and a focus on higher standards.

http://www.stltoday.com/news/opinion/mailbag/put-missouri-in-the-top-in-education/article_9a687f19-88ce-5c50-b4f6-6f768d128d79.html

More information about educator preparation in Missouri can found at dese.mo.gov/eq/ep/.