



Aurora Public Schools

Positive Behavior Program Yields Results



Creating a positive school culture is part of the work in every school. Aurora Public Schools is tackling this issue from an innovative angle with the Positive Behavior Intervention Support program. PBiS develops strategies that staff uses to increase academic performance, enhance safety, decrease problem behavior and establish positive school cultures.

APS launched the program to address the need for an effective social skills curriculum in the schools. Piloted at eight schools during its inception in 2007, 41 schools and the transportation department now participate in the program.

Recent data indicates that the program is working district-wide. PBiS sites recorded nearly 5,000 fewer office discipline referrals in the 2010-11 school year compared to the year before. The goal is to focus on the positive conduct that students display.

Participating schools have developed unique ways to promote PBiS with their students. For example, Dalton Elementary School teachers hand out tickets to students modeling positive behavior. Then, twice a month, principal Bonnie Hargrove holds a drawing to reward students with prizes. Dalton administrators have also placed posters around the school that highlight and enforce student and staff expectations.

“Kids have a very concrete knowledge on how to follow those rules,” said Caron Otto, psychologist and PBiS building facilitator at Dalton. “They know what positive behavior looks like and what we expect.”

Aurora West College Preparatory Academy teacher Kari Jacobsen-Laniel says that recognizing positive choices can have a lasting impact. “PBiS has allowed us to honor kids for who they are and what they are learning about life,” Jacobsen-Laniel said. “It is not a ‘quick fix’ program. Instead, it is part of a lifelong journey for students and adults to learn what it means to make good choices.”

To learn more about PBiS, visit equity.aurorak12.org/pbis.

