Direct, Ongoing, and Unique: Instructional Strategies to Support Prosocial Behavior in Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

by

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A thesis submitted to Sonoma State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS in Education with a concentration in Special Education

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Direct, Ongoing, and Unique

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effects of direct and ongoing instruction using a combination of research based best practices for teaching individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders. The specific practices revealed in the review of the literature that were also used in this study included positive behavioral support, social skills instruction, and self-regulation strategies. This study was completed in a California county run special day class for kindergarten and first graders referred for emotional and behavioral disorders. Already established methods of qualitative and quantitative data collection were used to evaluate the effects of this instruction that was designed by the teacher from already published curriculum and other resources. The methods described herein were found to have a positive effect on individual behaviors and students’ ability to follow the classroom rules during the first two trimesters of the school year, indicating that individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders benefited from direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies within a positive behavioral support environment.

Key words: emotional and behavioral disorders, positive behavioral support, social skills, self-regulation

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MA Program: Education
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Acknowledgement

I would like to dedicate this thesis to individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders. These youth are often labeled and misunderstood by their peers, teachers, and society as a whole. They come from many different places: products of their environment, enslaved by a mood disorder, or controlled by a mind and/or body that just won’t stop. Ultimately, every child is in need of direction and deserves the right to be understood. As we frequently say in our classroom, “you need to walk in someone else’s shoes”.

I would like to thank my husband and daughter for their patience and understanding while I spent late nights “doing homework”. I am so grateful for their love and support because I know this was time lost that I cannot make up. Let life begin again!

Finally, my absolute respect to Dr. Jennifer Mahdavi who introduced me to research when I was invited to research and write a paper with her. To say I was flattered would be an understatement. Without her encouragement I would not have thought that I could write a thesis or complete a Masters degree. Dr. Emiliano Ayala was also an inspiration to me, not just for what he taught me about special education, but because he always acknowledged me and took the time to talk with me even when I was not a student in one of his classes. Also, I am blessed to have a principal, Melinda Susan, who is always patient and forgiving of my “ED” moments, and knows what advice to give so that I stay grounded and focused on what is important.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

As an instructor to kindergarten and first grade individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), I am both a teacher and a behaviorist. A Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS) of 200,000 students revealed that the behaviors of this population of students receiving special education services ranged from internalizing to externalizing and both (Gage, 2013). This meant that within one classroom there might be individuals with depression, low self-esteem, loneliness, anxiety, defiance, or aggression, to name a few. According to the research, instruction for these students should be as diverse as they are and that a one size fits all approach will not work (Cook, Landrum, Tankersly, & Kauffman, 2003; Forness, 2005; Neel, Alexander, & Meadows, 1997; Schorr, 2003).

In my county run classroom the individuals who qualified for this program were bused from around the county to my classroom, which was located on a district campus. This was considered to be a less restrictive environment because while the students received their instruction within a special day class, they shared recess times and participated in assemblies and other campus activities with their general education peers. They qualified for services for various reasons including emotional disturbance, autism spectrum disorder, other health impaired, and speech and language disorder. Clearly, my students aligned with the diversity of this population described in the research.

Purpose of the Study and Research Question

It has been my practice not to look at the Social Emotional section of an individual’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP), or read the report from the psychologist early in the school year, because I did not want it to shape my impression of the child as I
get to know him or her. When I finally get around to reading this information I am always surprised to learn of the frequency and intensity of behaviors within their prior school settings. I am surprised because I have only witnessed those previously described behaviors in one out of every ten students that I have taught within this particular program over the past six years.

Behaviors commonly included on the IEPs of my students were physical aggression toward staff and peers, property destruction, an inability to follow directions or classroom rules, an inability to communicate or regulate emotions in order to get needs effectively met, and off task behaviors such as lack of attention to tasks. Of course, I was grateful not to see these behaviors in my classroom, but it made me wonder: what is the big difference between my program and their prior classroom environment? To answer this I looked closely at the cornerstones of my program, and from this my research question emerged: How does implementing direct and ongoing instruction in a combination of best practices for individuals with EBD impact students’ classroom behavior?

**Research Focus**

Three methods for teaching individuals with emotional behavioral disorders surfaced from the literature repeatedly: positive behavior support, social skills instruction, and self-regulation strategies that would manage behaviors and engage individuals in academic learning. The research also emphasized providing direct and ongoing instruction in a combination of these practices. It just so happened that these practices were the cornerstones of my program for kindergarten and first grade students with emotional and behavioral disorders.
**Positive behavior support.** Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) is a function-based approach to eliminate undesired behaviors and replace them with desired ones. It is based on the idea that an individual’s behaviors serve a specific function such as escape from a task, attention, or a specific need like food. If the function of the behavior can be understood, then a more appropriate behavior can be taught in its place through positive reinforcement. Specific skill sets identified in individuals in need of PBS include social skills and self-management (Farkas, et al. 2012; George, et al 2013; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013).

**Social skills.** Social skills are described as a combination of the ability to understand and manage one’s own emotional state and the ability to understand and respond to other people. They also represent a set of competencies that help to initiate and maintain relationships, contribute to peer acceptance, contribute to successful school experience, and cope with and adapt to the demands of a social environment (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006). Two critical components of social skills instruction are conflict resolution and self-management (Johns, Crowley, & Geutzloe, 2005).

**Self-regulation.** Self-management is an increased awareness of social and academic behaviors and an ability to manage them (Neel, Alexander, & Meadows, 1997). Another form of self-management most commonly referred to by Occupational Therapists is self-regulation. Self-regulation is based on Jean Ayers (1972) theory of sensory integration, which she described as the neurological process that organizes sensation from one’s own body and from the environment and makes it possible to use the body effectively. Self-regulation and sensory integration were relevant to this study because individuals with EBD often also have sensory processing problems (Dunn, 2001;

**Research Design**

To investigate research-based best practices, this thesis study was conducted using a classroom case study of four kindergarten and six first grade students who qualified for special education services with a variety of emotional and behavioral disorders. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used to explore and analyze the effects of direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies within a positive behavioral support environment. Baseline data were taken during the first four weeks of the school year and data collection continued until the end of the second trimester. During this time the students participated in thirty to forty minutes of social skills and self-regulation instruction four days a week. Additionally, there were multiple positive behavior supports in place designed to motivate the students to make good choices throughout the day.

**Significance**

According to the U.S. Department of Education, less than one percent of students receiving special education services do so under the category of emotional disturbance (USDE., 2008). The National Alliance on Mental Illness stated that 21 percent of school-age children have mental health problems severe enough to require services (NAMI, 2010). This indicates that children with emotional and behavioral disorders are in our schools and in need of these best practices. Having investigated these best practices and implemented them into my classroom for children with emotional and behavioral
disorders, I am able to make recommendations for teaching this population of students so that they can meet their full potential in our schools.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Like many teachers of children receiving special education services, my desire and goal for my students is that they will leave my classroom with the skills required to be successful in a general education environment. As a teacher of young children with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), I also want my students to leave with skills that will support them beyond the classroom and into their social interactions and everyday problem solving. For these reasons, I am always asking: “what do they need? What desired behaviors should I be teaching them and how can I teach them to manage undesired behaviors so that they can be successful students and successful individuals?”

In an effort to answer these questions I have found it informative to understand how individuals with EBD become eligible for services, the characteristics of those who qualify, and instructional strategies that have been found to be effective with individuals demonstrating those characteristics.

In this review of the literature, I examined how individuals with EBD qualify for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). I also evaluated the definition of emotional disturbance (ED) outlined in IDEA and considered some of the arguments surrounding this definition and the socially maladjusted clause. In response to these arguments I referred to current research regarding the characteristics of individuals receiving services for EBD. Ultimately, I investigated what the research recommended for instructional strategies and dug deeper into research that examined specific best practices. In conclusion, I considered the limitations and future directions for research.
History of Services for Individuals with Emotional Disturbance

School-based response to emotional behavioral disorders dates back to 1910 through the 1950s with what was known as the “Mental Hygiene Movement”. The purpose of this movement was to teach socially acceptable behaviors in order to reduce social deviance (Handler, 2011). The ability of public schools to treat these individuals declined in the mid 1950s and as a result, many youth demonstrating social deviance ended up in isolated facilities including asylums, workhouses, and psychiatric hospitals designed for adults. Most of these children did not improve academically or behaviorally, in fact the mental condition of many deteriorated.

In 1955 and 1957 the Joint Commission on Mental Illness and Health (JCMH) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA) recommended the deinstitutionalization of adults in favor of relocating services for the mentally ill to community agencies, stating that institutions were neither effective nor appropriate for treatment and care. The commission also observed that a consistent definition did not exist for individuals identified as emotionally disturbed and therefore offered that they were persons “under psychological stress that they cannot tolerate” (JCMH 1961, xii). While the commission concluded that early intervention was key to preventing the progression of emotional disturbance, few recommendations were provided for the 400 to 800 million children affected by the deinstitutionalization. Congress did not address this problem until 1965 when they established the Joint Commission of Mental Health of Children (JCMHC).

President John F. Kennedy was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald in 1964. This event brought the public awareness of mental illness to the surface when in the Warren Report (1964) Oswald was characterized as emotionally disturbed and having had a
troubled past that society was unable to provide relief of or help for. It was then that President Johnson initiated the JCMHC with a focus on the root causes and treatment of individuals with emotional disturbance under the age of 21. The Commission determined that the root of emotional disturbance was internal, and not a result of the individual’s environment, however they continued to look at the societal conditions associated with emotional disturbance in order to determine what was necessary for both the physical and mental strength and health of our youth. After a four-year study the Commission offered suggestions for improving services and programs for children with emotional disturbance such as the use of a spectrum of differentiated placement options and instructional practices to match the needs of the child. The research of the commission later contributed to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, the precursor to IDEA.

**IDEA and the Socially Maladjusted Clause**

In 1997 the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was amended and IDEA was enacted. According to IDEA, “an individual with emotional disturbance is characterized by one or more of the following over a long period of time and to a marked degree which adversely affect education performance:

a. an inability to learn that cannot by explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;

b. an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers or teachers;

c. inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances;

d. a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
e. a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.” (IDEA 1997, 2004)

Additionally, this definition includes children who are schizophrenic. The above described are considered to be internalizing behaviors such as anxiety and depression, and they are believed to be beyond an individual’s control.

The ED criteria in IDEA outlined above does not include children who are socially maladjusted, unless they are also ED. Social maladjustment is considered to be a conduct disorder, such as oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), and the philosophy behind this exclusion is that these individuals are responsible for their own behavior and therefore do not have a legitimate disability. This discrepancy has become known as the “socially maladjusted exclusion clause” and has sparked controversy and heated arguments among special educators and researchers since the implementation of IDEA in 1997. In an article proposing Response to Intervention (RTI) as a means for identifying individuals with emotional disturbance, Gresham (2005) asserted that “this logic is convoluted, circular, and borders on oxymoronic” in that this definition “excludes and includes a portion of students in the same sentence and directly contradicts several of the five eligibility criteria” (p. 330). Gresham argued that individuals with conduct disorders have an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers or teachers, and that they also have inappropriate behaviors and feelings under normal circumstances, both of which qualify an individual as ED under IDEA.

The history of the socially maladjusted clause and its impact on serving individuals with behavior disorders in special education was discussed by Merrell and Walker (2004). They referred to the work of Eli Bower, who developed a definition for
emotional disturbance and a protocol for identifying California students who were in need of services due to emotional and behavioral problems in the 1960s. The five characteristics that Bower used to define emotional disturbance were later used in the definition of ED under IDEA, only it was altered with the exclusion of the socially maladjusted clause. Merrell and Walker argued that the intent was “to provide an avenue for excluding some students from special education eligibility who otherwise would have met the seriously emotionally disturbed eligibility criterion” and that “it has been widely assumed among researchers in the Emotional or Behavioral Disorder field that this clause was added to satisfy the concerns of legislators and educational administrators who did not want schools to be mandated to provide services to delinquent and antisocial youth, a notoriously difficult to reach population” (p. 901). This quote is another example of the strong opinions and feelings surrounding who should be eligible for services under the category of “Emotional Disturbance”.

**Who is Being Served under the Label “Emotional Disturbance?”**

The American Psychiatric Association estimated that 20 percent of school-aged children could qualify for a psychiatric diagnosis (Angold, 2000), and the National Alliance on Mental Illness stated that 21 percent of school-age children have mental health problems severe enough to require services (NAMI, 2010). However, According to the U.S. Department of Education, less than one percent of students receiving special education services do so under the category of emotional disturbance (USDE, 2008). The concern in excluding individuals with externalizing behaviors from special education services under IDEA is that only a small population of individuals with emotional and behavioral needs are actually being served.
The Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study (SEELS) was used by Nicholas Gage to determine the characteristics of individuals receiving special education services for emotional disturbance (Gage, 2013). In his weighted sample of 200,000 students he considered both internalizing and externalizing behaviors that were measured on a 3-point Likert scale. Internalizing characteristics included loneliness, unprompted group participation, low self-esteem, ease of friend making, depression, and conversation initiation. Externalizing characteristics included starting arguments, avoiding troubled situations, anger control, conflict resolution, fighting, and following directions. Three classes of students emerged as a result of this research. First, the “internalizing class” was identified as those exhibiting behaviors high on the internalizing list and low on the externalizing list. This class represented seven percent of the sample. Second, the “externalizing class” was identified as those who exhibited behaviors high on the externalizing list, but low on the internalizing list. This class represented 14 percent of the sample. Finally, the “control class” was identified as individuals who exhibited behaviors from both lists, but neither to an extreme. This class contained the largest amount of the sample at 67 percent.

Gage’s research was an informative thread to the research and controversy of how emotional disturbance is defined and the characteristics of those who are being treated. While it does not account for the small percentage of individuals receiving services for emotional disturbance in contrast with the high estimate of individuals with mental health issues, it shows that individuals with both internalizing and externalizing behaviors are being served through IDEA under the category of ED.
Best Practices

The National Agenda for Achieving Better Results for Children and Youth with Serious Emotional Disturbance followed the roll out of IDEA in 1997. As a result, interventions and program examples were reviewed by Richard Neel, Laura Alexander, and Nancy Meadows (1997) in order to outline a framework for increasing their effectiveness. They highlighted two strategies: self-management and cognitive problem solving. They described self-management as an increased awareness of social and academic behaviors and an ability to manage them. Cognitive problem solving was described as interpersonal problem solving skills with a focus on solving social problems that should help the child to mediate socially competent behavior in a variety of situations and contexts. The authors determined that self-management and cognitive problem solving would be more effective when combined with other types of interventions such as positive behavior support, and when applied for a longer period of time.

As a framework for developing effective programs, the authors concluded that instruction should be diverse because emotional disturbance is too complex for one specific curriculum or instructional paradigm, and that the social and emotional needs and intents expressed by students through their behavior should be the organizing principle for designing programs. Ultimately, they recommended what is known as a needs-based program and encouraged increased resources over less restrictive environments defining best practice as “a process, not a program; an approach rather than a package” (Neel et al., p. 11). This early research is important because it set the ground work and is supported by more recent research discussed herein.
A similar conclusion was also reached by Steven Forness in his pursuit of evidence-based practices for individuals with EBD where he acknowledged that a successful model could not be duplicated across classrooms because it must be customized to meet the current circumstances. Forness referred to positive behavioral support as one well-researched and data-driven intervention for individuals with EBD. Additionally, he referred to data taken by the U.S. Department of Education across all special education categories that showed social skill impairments and problem behaviors to be greatest in the category of emotional disturbance when compared to their learning disabled peers, indicating a need for direct instruction in social skills and self-management of behaviors as well as positive behavior support (Forness, 2005).

Individuals with EBD need social and behavioral interventions (Cook, Landrum, Tankersly, & Kauffman, 2003). These authors discussed the importance of adapting effective practices to best meet the needs of the students and the classroom environment and provided the names of interventions specifically designed to meet the academic, social, and behavioral needs of individuals with EBD. They emphasized that in order for any intervention to be effective it must be consistently and routinely implemented with fidelity, meaning that teachers need to know what to teach, how to teach it, and follow through with it every day in the classroom in order for the students to benefit.

Three common themes emerged from the research in best practices for individuals with EBD: positive behavioral support, social skills, and self-management. The best practices culled from the above research are relevant to my own practice and research because the three that emerged are used in my own classroom for individuals with EBD. Research in positive behavioral support, social skills instruction, and a form of self-
management will be examined individually below. Because there was a lot of crossover in the use of strategies, each of the authors and the strategies they discussed is shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Behavioral Support</th>
<th>Social Skills</th>
<th>Self-Management</th>
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<tr>
<td>Barnes, et al., 2008</td>
<td>Barnes, et al., 2008</td>
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<td>Forness, 2005</td>
<td>George, et al., 2013</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Johns, Crowley, &amp; Geutzloe, 2005</td>
<td>Johns, Crowley, &amp; Geutzloe, 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Positive behavior support.** One evidence-based strategy culled from best practices for teaching individuals with EBD that was also recommended by IDEA for dealing with challenging behavior in children (IDEA, 1997, 2004), was positive behavioral support interventions. Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) is a function-based approach to eliminate undesired behaviors and replace them with desired ones. More commonly known today is the school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) method. This is a three-tiered prevention and intervention model outlined in Figure 1 below demonstrating that Tier 1 is established school-wide, Tier II is class-wide, and Tier III is individual (Farkas, Simonsen, Migdole, Donovan, Clemens, & Cicchese, 2012). The tiers provide flexibility and support in the event an individual does not respond positively to the first tier of intervention, more support can be provided until the desired outcome is achieved. One important characteristic of SWPBS is direct and ongoing instruction woven throughout the curriculum in each of the following: school-wide expectations such
as what it means to be responsible and respectful; intensive social skills training in problem solving and appropriate reactions; self-management strategies for identifying anger triggers and utilizing appropriate replacement behaviors to manage overreactions.

Another key component of SWPBS is the use of positive reinforcement strategies such as verbal praise, tangibles like stickers, and a token economy (Farkas et al., 2012; George et al., 2013). These are just a few examples, but the purpose of positive reinforcement is to increase the likelihood that desired behaviors will occur. Positive reinforcement can be designed to meet the needs of both the program and the individual; it can be as simple as a smile for a job well done or as goal focused as a student of the week or month program.

Figure 1. The three Tiers of School-wide Positive Behavioral Support

Two recent studies looked at SWPBS in classrooms for children identified with behaviors that were both internalizing and externalizing. One study evaluated the implementation of a tier I SWPBS within a private therapeutic junior high school with one year serving as the baseline followed by a second year of intervention (Farkas et al., 2012). One of the purposes of this study was to evaluate the effects on student behavior.
while others included implementation fidelity and social validity. In contrast, a fifteen year case study within a state funded school that served students ages six through twenty-one classified with emotional disturbance or autism under IDEA was conducted by four researchers on campus (George, George, Kern, & Fogt, 2013). The purpose of this study was to contribute to the body of literature on SWPBS by demonstrating its positive effects over a long period of time. In both of these studies students received ongoing direct instruction in behavioral expectations and a wide variety of positive reinforcements were implemented to address short term and long term needs. Two features that were unique to the long term case study were ongoing direct instruction in self-management strategies such as taking a break when frustrated, and ongoing direct instruction in problem solving to teach students how to effectively manage conflicts throughout the school day. Data from both of these studies is encouraging. In the two year study (Farkas et al. 2012) the desired student behaviors increased gradually by 28.94 percent from the baseline year while office referrals decreased by 42.86 percent. Positive results were even greater in the long term study where over fifteen years the rate of physical restraints declined by ninety-nine percent, suspensions by eighty-eight percent, and the seclusion method of time out was ultimately eliminated.

Two critical components described in the SWPBS method above were instruction in social skills and self-management. Research in these individual strategies is discussed below.

**Social Skills.** Social skills are described as a combination of the ability to understand and manage one's own emotional state and the ability to understand and respond to other people. They also represent a set of competencies that help to initiate
and maintain relationships, contribute to peer acceptance, contribute to successful school experience, and cope with and adapt to the demands of a social environment (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006). One of the articles discussed herein considered the role of teaching social skills and recommended specific strategies (Johns, Crowley, & Guetzloe, 2005), while the other evaluated the effectiveness of an experimental ABAB design to deliver an intense intervention in social skills to four first and second grade students identified as being at risk for developing an emotional and behavioral disorder (Gresham, Van, & Cook, 2006).

Some of the crossovers between the recommendations for practice and the intervention were the use of direct instruction, the teacher as role model, and the ongoing recognition of appropriate social skills. Observing and recognizing expected behavior with verbal praise should account for 70 percent of the teacher to student comments in one day according to Johns, Crowley, and Guetzloe (2005). Two critical components identified by Johns, Crowley, and Guetzloe (2005) but left out of the Gresham, Van, and Cook (2006) intervention were conflict resolution and self-management. Johns, Crowley, and Guetzloe (2005) asserted that an effective curriculum for students with emotional and behavioral disorders must include conflict resolution and that ultimately, we must teach students how to manage their own behavior. This was a limitation of the Gresham, Van, and Cook (2006) intervention which strictly followed Gresham and Elliot’s Social Skills Intervention Guide (1991). Regardless of this deficit, the four participants moved from the 95th percentile at baseline for Total Problem Behaviors as measured by the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) (Gresham & Elliot, 1990), to the 58th percentile after the intervention. These results provide practical significance for the individual and the
classroom because the SSRS measures communication, cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, engagement, and self control, in addition to both internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors. The decrease in problem behaviors experienced in the above studies are the kind of results teachers of children with EBD look for in an intervention because it has positive effects for the individual and the classroom as a whole.

**Sensory integration and self-management.** The remaining thread that began with best practices and wove through positive behavior support and social skills is self-management. Self-management was described above under best practices as an increased awareness of social and academic behaviors and an ability to manage them (Neel, Alexander, & Meadows, 1997). Another form of self-management most commonly referred to by Occupational Therapists is self-regulation. Effective self-regulation requires four components working together: sensory processing, executive functioning, emotional regulation, and social perspective taking (Kuypers, 2011). These components are described below.

Sensory processing is based on Jean Ayers’ theory of sensory integration which she described as “The neurological process that organizes sensations from one's body and from the environment, and makes it possible to use the body to make adaptive responses within the environment. To do this, the brain must register, select, interpret, compare, and associate sensory information in a flexible, constantly-changing pattern" (Ayers, 1972). Individual sensory preferences differ, meaning that sensory strategies have different effects on different people. Sensory activities involve inputs from proprioception, vision, the auditory and vestibular systems, tactile, olfactory, and taste in order to produce
functional outputs. A carefully designed sensory diet includes a personalized activity plan that provides the sensory input a person needs to stay focused and organized throughout the day (OT Innovations, 2006).

Executive functioning is the conscious control of one’s thoughts and actions such as attention shifting, working memory, self-talk, flexible thinking, and impulse control so that one’s behaviors match the needs of the environment (Kuypers, 2011). Emotional regulation refers to an individual’s ability to control their emotional reactions so that their needs are met, including their ability to remain engaged and attend to tasks. Finally, social perspective taking involves understanding that individual thoughts, feelings, and experiences differ and others can be affected emotionally by one’s own behaviors (Kuypers, 2011).

Self-regulation and sensory integration are relevant to this study because individuals with emotional disturbance often also have sensory processing problems (Dunn, 2001; Olson, 2001; Prior, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 2000). Additionally, children with emotional disturbance have difficulty regulating their behaviors in the classroom (Prior, 2001) as do children with sensory processing problems (Miller, Reisman, McIntosh, & Simon, 2001). With this in mind, the final section of this review of the literature on effective strategies for children with EBD will focus on sensory integration and self-regulation by examining four different studies. All four studies discussed herein used a sensory integration approach and three combined the effective self-regulation requirements described above. The main differences amongst the studies were in the population of participants and the locations of the studies.
In one study, four occupational therapists (Barnes, Vogel, Beck, Schoenfeld & Owen, 2008) wanted to know if and how the Alert Program (Williams & Shellenberger, 1996) improved twelve nine through eleven year olds’ ability to self-regulate, adjust behavior, and process sensory phenomena within their classrooms for children with emotional disturbance. The Alert Program uses cognitive learning and sensory activities to help individuals become aware of, maintain, or change their levels of alertness to match the demands of a situation or task (Williams & Shellenberger, 1996). The Alert program teaches children that their body runs like a car engine at low, just right, and high, and that all engine levels are okay, but “just right” is where it needs to be for learning. For example, your engine may be low when you are tired or sad, and high when you are involved in an exciting activity or mad. Sensory strategies are used to achieve and maintain a just right engine level.

This study was an eight week quasi-experimental pretest/posttest design in which there was a control group and an intervention group (Barnes et al., 2008). One of the pretest and posttest measures was the Devereux Behavior Rating Scale (DBRS) which evaluates behaviors typical of children with emotional behavioral disorders. The results of the DBRS indicated that the Alert Program had a positive effect on behaviors such as interpersonal skills, depression, and appropriate behaviors and feelings. Teachers also reported an improvement in self-regulation, focus, transition from tasks, individual organization, and an ability to cope with sensory challenges amongst those who participated in the Alert Program.

Author of the Zones of Regulation Leah Kuypers (2011) conducted a two year case study within a small group private therapy clinic on the effects of her program on
one third grade boy who struggled with regulating his emotions and getting along with his peers. Similar to The Alert Program, The Zones is a curriculum that teaches individuals to categorize their emotions and use strategies to regulate them. The Zones also includes a social thinking component to target executive functions. For example, it teaches individuals about expected and unexpected behaviors and how these and our own feelings impact others around us.

In an interview the participant admitted that he had trouble controlling his feelings, and that he had been told many times to take deep breaths or count to ten, but these had never worked for him. During weekly fifty-minute sessions the participant learned to name his feelings, identify them with one of the four zones, and select an effective strategy to regulate his emotions. Kuypers concluded that during the four years of direct instruction in The Zones (2100), the participant was better able to regulate his emotions and resulting behaviors. The Participant himself admitted that he appreciated The Zones because it taught him how to name his emotion and choose an effective strategy to deal with it thereby placing him in control.

In another study, three occupational therapy graduate students used Tools for Teens (Henry, 2004) in a residential treatment center (RTC) to determine its effectiveness as a sensory integration approach for identifying and managing feelings and behaviors (Dorman et al. 2009). The RTC was home to twelve females ages thirteen to seventeen with varying diagnoses including bipolar disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, Asperger syndrome, and pervasive developmental disorder. This is interesting because these diagnoses demonstrate the diversity of internalizing and externalizing behaviors amongst the participants. Tools for Teens teaches about the brain, how it processes
sensory phenomena and responds to events around us. Similar to The Alert Program and The Zones, Tools for Teens uses sensory preferences and strategies for regulating behaviors.

Prior to the intervention the therapists surveyed all of the participants to determine individual sensory needs in order to develop an intervention that would accomplish their goals. The intervention was applied in three two hour sessions. In the first session the occupational therapy students administered the Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) to each teen for baseline data. The teens received instruction in sensory needs and diets, and how these affected their interaction with the environment, including how they behaved. Finally, participants had an opportunity to experiment with sensory tools while learning about its effects on their nervous system. During the second session the residents made their own sensory tools such as weighted vests, animals, and lap blankets which were put in a sensory box that was placed in the residents’ lounge. At the third and final session participants were given individual plans based on their Sensory Profiles alongside folders containing pictures of each sensory item with possible uses and benefits for meeting sensory needs. Following the intervention the teens were observed by the staff as using a sensory diet and having less emotional outbursts in addition to being able to express an understanding of how to self-regulate while demonstrating a desire to do so.

The above three examples used social skills instruction along with the sensory integration approach in order to help individuals identify their feelings, communicate their needs, and manage their behaviors in ways that were socially appropriate. The example provided below used a sensory approach only in an attempt to modify the participant’s on task behaviors.
The effectiveness of Jean Ayer’s sensory integration approach for reducing undesirable behaviors and increasing engagement in purposeful activities was examined by Professor Renee Watling and occupational therapist Jean Dietz (2007) among preschool age boys diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) within a clinical setting. In this study, the researchers compared the participant’s engagement in tasks following free play in contrast to following sensory activities. Sensory activities were based on information previously gathered from the participant’s Sensory Profile (Dunn 1996). Additionally, the occupational therapist observed the child closely and made modifications to sensory activities as needed so that the participant was appropriately challenged and engaged. Each phase included three 40 minute intervention sessions per week that were followed by a 10 minute tabletop activity of tasks that were determined to be typical in an early childhood education environment such as puzzles, beads and strings, and blocks. The activity demands had to meet the cognitive and fine motor skills of the child, require focused attention, and purposeful engagement. The tabletop activity was a key component for data collection because this was where the researchers could determine if the participants were better able to focus and attend to task following free-play, or following sensory activities.

While Watling and Dietz did not observe immediate substantial effects on increased engagement following a sensory activity over free play, family members and other observers reported increased eye contact and compliance, better choice making and transitions, longer engagement and more positive social interactions following sensory activities at home and in clinical visits after the study. The authors considered the
possibility that the sensory activities had a positive effect over time, but this was not the purpose of the study so no measures were taken.

Research in the use of a sensory diet is more readily available in occupational therapy than education, but the above research indicated that sensory strategies can have positive effects on reducing behaviors and increasing engagement in learning environments. It is important to note that sensory processing disorder has never been recognized as a distinct disease and research regarding the effectiveness of using a sensory integration approach is limited and inconclusive. More studies must be conducted before sensory processing disorder can be officially recognized and measures for the effectiveness of sensory integration therapy need to be developed (Zimmer & Desch, 2012)

Conclusions

It is clear from the above research that individuals with EBD can be eligible for special education services under IDEA for a variety of factors. More specifically, both internalizing and externalizing behaviors can be associated with a range of disabilities from autism spectrum disorder (ASD), emotional disturbance (ED), or what is considered to be other health impaired (OHI) such as oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) and Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD/ADHD). As varied as individuals with these disabilities may seem, their success at school is dependent on a similar combination of strategies. The key is to have these strategies in place while being constantly mindful of more specific needs, so that the program is ongoing and evolving in order to have a positive outcome for all individuals. Individuals with EBD are complex, and the research clearly shows that these individuals possess a wide range of internalizing and
externalizing behaviors. Additionally, cognitive abilities range from below average to above average. Therefore an effective program for teaching them must also be complex because simple one size fits all approach will not work.

One of the common threads throughout the research of effective strategies was that more than one strategy was required, and under the umbrella of one strategy were a combination of strategies. For example, positive behavior support (PBS) interventions included social skills instruction and self-management of behaviors such as anger. Social skills instruction also included behavior management or self-regulation. Some programs designed around the sensory integration approach also included social skills instruction around empathy and understanding how our behaviors affect others around us. Finally, all of the researchers emphasized that direct and ongoing instruction was necessary for both the immediate and long-term effectiveness of an intervention. Similar to anything that teachers want students to learn, interventions for individuals with EBD should be embedded into the school and classroom cultures. Table 2 lists the specific strategies used in the above research. Specific curricula that contain instructional content, materials, and resources are referenced at the top of each section followed by other specific strategies and methods. Several of the curricula are listed under more than one strategy headline because a combination of strategies was inherent.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Behavioral Support</th>
<th>Social Skills</th>
<th>Self-Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional behavioral analysis (FBA)</td>
<td>Aggression Replacement Training (Goldstein &amp; Glick, 1987)</td>
<td>The Zones of Regulation (Kuypers, 2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point-based level system</td>
<td>How Does Your Engine Run? (Williams &amp; Shellenberger, 1996)</td>
<td>Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) (Kusche &amp; Greenberg, 1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision requests</td>
<td>ACCEPTS social skills curriculum Walker et al., 1983</td>
<td>FAST &amp; SLAM (Vaughn, Bos, &amp; Scumm, 1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>response cost</td>
<td>Cognitive problem solving</td>
<td>PEACE (Lantieri &amp; Patti 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive behavior tickets daily point sheets</td>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>COPING (Eggert, 1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positively stated expectations</td>
<td>Appropriate communication of feelings and needs</td>
<td>Aggression Replacement Training (Goldstein &amp; Glick, 1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behavior-descriptive praise</td>
<td>Teacher as role model</td>
<td>Skillstreaming, (Goldstein, Sprafkin, Gershaw, and Klein 1980)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school-wide student recognition</td>
<td>Cognitive behavioral therapy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social recognition</td>
<td>Anger management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-regulation through sensory integration strategies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sensory diets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finally, in each of the above research in best practices and specific strategies, an individualized plan that was designed to meet the needs of the individual was emphasized. Whether a Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) was used to determine individual sensory needs, or the Devereux Behavior Rating Scale (DBRS) was administered to target undesired behaviors, or researcher-made questionnaires were designed to understand social deficits or preferences, all of the pretest data was used to craft an individualized intervention. The importance of an individualized approach was also highlighted in best practices.

**Limitations and Future Directions**

The primary and overall limitation was a limited amount of research in evidence-based practices for teaching children with emotional and behavioral disorders. In fact, each of the articles in the strategies reviewed contained a statement declaring that more research was needed in this area. Steven Forness stated it best by concluding that “while we have made considerable progress in special education for children with emotional or behavioral disorders, this progress is more in the direction of thinking more purposively about what constitutes evidence-based practice and how to sustain it than it is in actually putting such practices into place” (2005, p. 322). Also telling but specific to one strategy is “although the Alert Program was reported as one of the most frequently used interventions by occupational therapists providing services to children with emotional disturbance, research evidence is lacking” (Barnes et al., 2003). This is particularly discouraging because as a special educator in this field I have encountered some good programs used by great teachers who are accomplishing encouraging things with this
complex population of students, therefore I think it is a shame that this every day evidence is not researched and published.

Some other limitations included the small populations of participants (eg. Gresham, Van & Cook, 2006; Barnes et al., 2008; Kuypers, 2011), a unique classroom (Dorman et al. 2009), or in one case clinical, environments (Watling & Dietz, 2007). The effectiveness of the interventions and strategies reviewed in the above literature across a range of school ages, and in a variety of environments from small special day class to general education, was evident through observation and pretest/posttest measures, but was not statistically significant. Additionally, it was not possible to ascertain if any of the discussed strategies were more or less effective on individuals with a specific disability because as discussed up front, the population of individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders is very broad.

Finally, all of the above research focused on decreasing undesired behaviors while increasing desired ones; however, none of these reported any effects on academic achievement. Future research should evaluate academic progress alongside behavioral progress in order to broaden the effects and enhance the results of using research based best practices in classrooms for individuals with EBD.

While there is a limited amount of research in the implementation and effectiveness of strategies for teaching individuals with EBD, and there is a controversy surrounding who is and should be served, the above research validated my own practice and that of my colleagues currently teaching children with emotional and behavioral disorders in this California county. Positive behavior support, social skills instruction, and self-regulation are the cornerstones of some of our programs, but unfortunately not
all. The history of educating this unique population demonstrates that practice has come a long way from placing children in institutions. However, what is now lacking is research that demonstrates strategies that have a positive effect on behavior, and even more lacking and needed is research that shows a direct correlation between improved behavior and increased academic progress.
Chapter 3: Methods

Site and Participants

This study was completed during the 2013-2014 school year in a California County run classroom located on a District elementary school campus. The classroom was established six years ago as an early intervention for Kindergarten and first graders with behavior disorders and emotional disturbance. While the students received their daily instruction in the small class environment of a special day class (SDC), they shared recess times with their age appropriate peers and participated in school wide events such as assemblies and use of the campus library every week.

In addition to myself, the education specialist, the classroom was staffed with two full time paraprofessionals. In addition, an Educationally Related Mental Health Services Provider (classroom psychologist) was onsite two and a half days each week to meet with students individually and in small groups for social skills instruction using the Second Step curriculum. An occupational therapist provided fine motor activities and offered assistance in sensory regulation choices for two hours once a week, and an adaptive physical educator offered gross motor activities to the whole class for thirty minutes once a week. The speech and language pathologist brought her services to the classroom twice a week using both a push in and pull out model so that all individuals benefited and those with specific deficits received the direct instruction that they required.

This classroom had ten students at the time of the study, four kindergartners and six first graders. Some of the students came from county operated preschools, while others were referred from district preschools, transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade classrooms. Each of the students was referred for behavioral reasons and each
had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that included at least one behavior goal. Individuals with an IEP are eligible for special education services based on thirteen specific categories. These categories are defined within the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and may or may not be linked with a medical diagnosis, but individuals can qualify for services due to category-like characteristics. Some of the students in the PEBLL class had no medical diagnosis while others had several. Table 3 shows student demographics.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student*</th>
<th>Age/ Grade</th>
<th>IEP category of qualification</th>
<th>Medical or Psychiatric Diagnoses</th>
<th>Behaviors that resulted in a PEBLL placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Adam     | 7/1        | 1.  Autism  
2. Speech & Language Impairment | 1. Autism  
2. ADHD with an oppositional & anxiety component | Yelling at, hitting, kicking, and throwing things at peers. Yelling at staff when redirected. Ripping up papers and turning over chairs. |
| Billy    | 6/1        | 1. Other Health Impaired  
2. Emotional Disturbance | 1. ADHD  
2. ODD  
3. Anxiety Disorder | Hitting, spitting, biting, verbal threats, and negative comments toward peers and adults. Inability to follow directions, classroom rules and routines. |
| Cole     | 6/1        | Emotional Disturbance | None | Temper tantrums, profanity, throwing chairs and other objects at adults, physical aggression toward adults and peers |
| David    | 5/K        | Speech & Language impairment | Speech apraxia | Defiance, crying, whining, hitting peers & adults, turning over and throwing chairs |
| Eddie    | 5/K        | 1. Speech & Language impairment  
2. Autism | None | Anger, defiance, throwing chairs |
| Francis  | 7/1        | 1. Emotional Disturbance  
2. Speech & Language impairment | Psychiatric evaluation & medical diagnosis in progress, family history of ASD, OCD, & bipolar disorder | Inability to follow directions and classroom routines, throwing temper tantrums |
<p>| Gio      | 6/1        | Speech &amp; Language impairment | None | Oppositional defiance, physical aggression, and yelling |
| Harold   | 6/1        | Speech &amp; Language impairment | None | Opposition, anger, inability to follow directions |
| Ivan     | 6/K        | Speech &amp; | None | Excessive profanity |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jake</th>
<th>6/K</th>
<th>Other Health Impaired</th>
<th>Language impairment</th>
<th>toward peers &amp; adults, hitting peers, laughing at inappropriate times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Tourette’s Disorder</td>
<td>Hitting peers, following directions, and staying on task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. ODD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. ADHD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Mood Disorder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All student names are pseudonyms.

**Procedure**

The framework of this California county run classroom included some already established positive behavioral supports and use of the following social skills and self-regulation curricula: *The Alert Program* (Williams & Shellenberger, 1996), *The Zones of Regulation*, also known as *The Zones*, (Kuypers, 2011), and *Superflex* (Madrigal, 2008; Madrigal & Winner, 2008, 2009, 2012). Descriptions of each of these and how they were implemented and used is described below.

Positive behavior support. The cornerstones of positive behavior support (PBS) are direct instruction of expected behaviors, positively stated rules and consistent routines so that the environment is predictable, data collection to evaluate individual success, and data based modifications to ensure individual success (Scott, Park, Swain-Bradway, & Landers, 2007). How each of these criteria were implemented in the classroom is discussed herein; however, instruction in specific behaviors that were embedded within the social skills and self-regulation curricula is described in the following section.

Classroom rules and their definitions were positively stated and are described in Table 4. In order to ensure that the classroom rules were memorized and understood it was a daily classroom job for one individual to state each rule and its definition to the class. Classroom jobs were completed every morning during a circle activity and rotated...
each week so that every individual cycled through each job every ten weeks. Another
classroom job was to state and define the monthly life skill to the class. Life skills
discussed during this study included respect, responsibility, problem solving,
compassion, initiative, and integrity. Reparation was also established for specific
behaviors such as name calling, throwing objects in the classroom, or not keeping your
hands and feet to yourself, to name a few. The purpose of reparation was to repair the
relationship or damage caused by a bad choice. For example, the reparation for name
calling was to say three nice, meaningful things to the person who was offended; if a
paper was torn up and thrown on the floor, the reparation was to pick up ten pieces of
garbage and throw it away.

Table 4: Classroom Rules and Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Rule</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respect Peers</td>
<td>Keep your hands and feet to yourself</td>
<td>Respectful tone, words, and gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect Adults</td>
<td>Listen and follow directions</td>
<td>Respectful tone, words, and gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect Property</td>
<td>Use property only in the way it was meant to be used</td>
<td>Anything that is not a person is property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay on Task</td>
<td>Give your full attention to your current task</td>
<td>Use whole body listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check Your Engine</td>
<td>Use strategies to keep your engine just right for learning</td>
<td>Take 5, it’s on me, take more, you owe me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reparation was initially taught during a whole class activity that included student
input on what they felt would repair the damage caused by a specific behavior. Once the
list of reparations was understood and agreed upon by students and staff, a chart with
visuals for each behavior and consequent reparation was posted in the room as a reminder
and nonverbal prompt for what individual’s needed to do before earning their next
preferred activity. A copy of the reparation chart is provided in Appendix A.
The outcome of building discussion surrounding life skills, the classroom rules and their meaning, and the consequences for specific behaviors into the daily routine was that there was little argument from students when a consequence or redirection was applied. For example, if individuals were struggling to keep their hands to themselves while in line a simple “what is the number one way we show respect to our peers?” prompt would result in all students facing the front of the line with their hands to their side. If a student had called a peer “stupid” during an academic center the prompt “what do you need to do before recess?” would result in that student apologizing and saying three nice things to the peer. The expected behaviors, rules, and consequences did more of the talking and redirecting than the staff.

The classroom routine was consistent Monday through Thursday and a schedule with visual icons for each activity was posted in the circle area of the classroom. During the first months of school the schedule was reviewed during morning circle and throughout the day until all students transitioned from one activity to another without incident. The Friday schedule was different from Monday through Thursday, but the same every Friday so that it too was consistent and predictable. Service providers such as the classroom psychologist, speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, and adaptive physical education teacher were all asked to confirm their weekly schedules prior to the first day of school so that these were embedded and consistent from day one. When there were changes in the routine such as assemblies, emergency drills, or special activities, the students were informed the day before and reminded repeatedly so that it was not a surprise.
Social skills and self-regulation strategies. Social skills and self-regulation strategies are discussed together in this section because the curricula that were used included both and were used cooperatively. Direct and ongoing instruction of the concepts within the curricula is described herein and was implemented by teaching the simplest concepts first, and progressing toward those more difficult for young children to understand.

Instructional time was embedded into the classroom schedule and occurred four afternoons a week for 45 minutes. Instruction usually began with a story or circle activity followed by a small group table activity, whole class game, or role play.

The very first curriculum introduced to these young learners was The Alert Program (Williams & Schellenberger, 1996). It teaches children that their body runs like a car engine at low, just right, or high, and that all engine levels are appropriate at certain times, but an engine must be just right for learning. For example, your engine runs low when you are sad or tired, just right when you are alert and focused, and red when you are angry or extremely excited. In line with The Alert Program curriculum, the first lessons focused on identifying individual engine levels. During the first several weeks of school the students learned about their engine levels through discussion and stories. This included discussion about what feelings were associated with each engine level and what events might cause an individual to feel that way and thereby associate with one of the three engine levels.

In order to solidify this concept of specific feelings being related to a low, just right, or high engine level, students cut out pictures from magazines that they felt represented feelings attached to specific engine levels. Additionally, students crafted their own engine gauge from half of a paper plate where a fraction at the far left was colored
blue to indicate a low engine level, a fraction was colored green to indicate a just right
engine level, and a fraction at the far right was colored red to indicate a high engine.
Between the green (just right) and red (high) engine levels, a fraction was reserved for
yellow. Students were told that they would learn about the yellow engine level soon. An
arrow was attached with a brad so that students could use it to show their engine levels.
The gauges were used at circle times during the first month of school to get an “engine
check” from each student. This enabled them to practice identifying and naming their
feelings while associating it with a specific engine level. A picture of an individual
gauge is provided in Appendix B.

_The Zones of Regulation_ curriculum (Kuypers, 2011) was introduced at this time
in order to give the students a deeper understanding of their engine levels. Kuypers
divided the engine levels into “zones” and included a fourth level, or zone, between just
right and high. This zone was an important addition because it represents the cautionary
sign that individuals should stop, and choose a tool to regulate their feelings. Feelings
associated with the yellow zone include overwhelmed, nervous, silly, and frustrated, to
name a few. More feelings associated with each engine level or zone are shown in Table
5. The purpose for introducing _The Alert Program_ first was that in my experience, young
children really connect with the engine concept and quickly learn how to use their engine
gauge to identify their feelings, but from this point forward the terms zone and engine
level were used interchangeably.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Zone/engine level</th>
<th>Feelings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blue/low</td>
<td>Tired, exhausted, sad, depressed, lazy, bored, shy, sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Green/just right</td>
<td>Happy, kind, alert, attentive, appreciated, calm, proud, focused, thankful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Jealous, frustrated, anxious, annoyed, silly, excited, nervous, uncomfortable, embarrassed, confused, grouchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red/high</td>
<td>Angry, hyperactive, terrified, aggressive, mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the yellow zone was introduced, the students cut out pictures from magazines of people who appeared to be in the yellow zone and they began to use the yellow zone on their engine gauge along with the other engine levels in a very general way, during daily engine checks. Finally, the class was divided into four small groups where each was assigned a zone and given a poster board in the shape and color of their zone. Using the magazine pictures that had been cut out in previous lessons, and some provided by *The Alert Program* and *Zones* curricula, the students completed a poster for each zone. These posters were then hung in the engine room (described below) as a reminder of the many emotions they might feel. A picture of the classroom Zones posters is provided in Appendix C.

The next series of lessons were an introduction to tools that the students could use to change their engine level or zone. The engine level or zone of this specific age and population was most often high, and very seldom low, therefore calming strategies and
focusing techniques were the primary agenda. One of these tools was a separate space that was created as a last resort in the event a just right engine level or green zone was not achieved through the use of other tools. The classroom had a space set aside called the engine room where students were encouraged to go and “check your engine”. Room dividers were used to separate this space from the classroom. Inside of this space were posters of calming strategies and sensory tools designed to help individuals be calm and focused. A picture of the engine room is provided in Appendix D. The backdoor of the classroom that opened to a small porch was in the engine room. This led to the chill zone which was an outside space that was enclosed with room dividers and could be observed from a window inside of the classroom. The chill zone could be used in the same way as the engine room and was especially encouraged when a student was loud and disruptive. A picture of the chill zone is provided in Appendix E. The students were shown how to use the calming strategies inside of these spaces. In order to promote appropriate use of these spaces two specific rules and the consequences for breaking them were established and taught repeatedly so that every student had them memorized. The first rule was that the individual had five free minutes to check their engine, anything more than that was owed back in classroom work during recess. This rule was established to prevent the space from being used as an escape from task. The second rule was that the individual was expected to stay in their chosen area or they would lose their privilege of going outside for recess times. The emphasis was placed on the fact that the adults in the room were responsible for knowing where they were at all times so that we could keep them safe. If they could not be trusted to stay where they were expected to be, then they could not be out of the sight of the teacher for the rest of the day. This also discouraged
interaction between a student who was using the engine room to regulate at the same time a student was using the chill zone.

According to the research of Williams & Shellenberger (1996) there are five sensorimotor methods to change engine levels. Each of these methods and a brief description is shown in Table 6. A complete description can be viewed in “How Does Your Engine Run?” A Leaders Guide to The Alert Program for Self-Regulation (1996). Based on this theory, a classroom toolbox of hand fidgets, weighted vests and bean bags, various sit fits, Theraputty, lycra CuddleLoops that provide the pressure of a hug, Chewelry, and other tools that provided some form of sensory input were introduced to the students. They were shown how to use each tool and were told the rule with the tool: “it has to keep you calm and on task otherwise it’s not doing its job and it goes back in the box”. Students experimented with each tool while the staff asked questions about their engine levels and feelings. From that point forward students were encouraged to use tools throughout the day. At first, the staff members would make suggestions based on the behavior and what had been observed to be effective at fostering a just right engine or green zone during prior activities. Eventually, students initiated use of the appropriate tool. If it did not appear to do the job, the student was prompted with “what’s the rule with the tool?” so that the tool was put away or a more effective one was selected. A picture of the classroom tool box is provided in Appendix F.
Table 6: Sensorimotor Methods to Change Your Engine Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensorimotor Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Put something in your mouth</td>
<td>Categorized by what you select, what you do with it, and how it feels or tastes (Wilbarger, J. 1993; Oetter, P. 1991).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move</td>
<td>Vestibular and proprioceptive inputs include oscillation, rotary, inverted, heavy work, crash and bump.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch</td>
<td>Tactile input includes hand fidgets, temperature, light touch, and deep touch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look</td>
<td>Visual input includes light (or lack of), color, and visual distractions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>Auditory input includes noise level, variation of rhythm, and auditory distractions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the classroom tools were introduced the lesson focus turned to teaching students about their own specific engine levels and zones. First students were taught about times that it would be expected for them to have specific feelings. For example, if you don’t feel well you would be expected to have a low engine or be in the blue zone. Next, students were taught how to identify each zone or engine level within themselves. For example, many of the students admitted to feeling super excited and near the red zone during the last fifteen minutes of work time in anticipation of recess. There were many activities to follow during which students practiced matching feelings to one of the four zones. For example, the classroom was divided into each of the four zones and students were instructed to walk to the zone that represented a feeling that was called out. The culminating project from this series of lessons was that each student had their own “Me in My Zones” book that included a picture of themselves in each zone, descriptions of their face and body indicators for that zone, and a list of times during the day or events that caused them to feel that way.
The next focus was on triggers that could lead to a high engine or red zone. This was where the yellow zone really came into play. One of the activities during these lessons was a yellow caution poster made by each student that had their triggers glued to it. The triggers were developed from earlier discussions about triggers and staff observations of individual triggers. Some examples of triggers included hungry, raised hand wasn’t called on, last in line, and got the answer wrong. A list of over thirty triggers was typed up, printed out, cut into individual triggers, and put into a hat. Students pulled a trigger out of the hat and when it was read they raised their hand if they felt that was one of their triggers. Copies were made of each trigger so that there was enough for each student to glue as many to their caution poster as they felt applied. Helping individuals to identify their triggers assisted the staff as much as the students. For example, one student did not respond well to changes in the daily schedule such as the absence of an expected support provider, or an unexpected assembly. Because we were aware of this we were able to help that individual make a smooth transition through the change by explaining it to him as soon as we were aware of it, and continually discussing it with him until he was able to repeat it back to us. This was the method that worked best for him because he was very verbal and perseverated on many things.

Once the students understood their own triggers they were better prepared to learn how to use tools to regulate their engine speed or zone, so more extensive instruction and practice with the tools was conducted. One of the activities included three small group centers where individuals experimented with specific types of sensory tools while the staff facilitated discussion about their feelings and made notes on a tools worksheet. One of the centers offered proprioceptive or deep pressure tools such as weighted vests, lap
weights, and head weights. Another center had oral tools such as various things to chew on including gum. The third center had a variety of hand fidgets. When the activity was completed, the staff and students had a better understanding of the effects of different tools on individual engines so that appropriate choices could be made depending on the need.

At this point the *Superflex* curriculum was introduced (Madrigal, 2008; Madrigal & Winner, 2008, 2009, 2012) because it brought to life four big and complex ideas that are included in *The Zones of Regulation*, but were more accessible to these young learners through *Superflex*. In fact, Kuypers referenced Superflex in the chapters on these topics in *The Zones of Regulation*. These ideas were expected vs. unexpected behaviors, big vs. little problems, inner coach vs. inner critic, and how an individual’s behavior affects others around him or her.

*Superflex* is a super hero who uses flexible thinking to defeat the team of *Unthinkables*. The *Unthinkables* are animated in several books that use cartoons to introduce each character and describe how they get stuck in your brain and cause a specific behavior. The cartoons teach individuals how to identify and defeat each character. For example, Glassman causes you to have huge reactions to little problems. To defeat Glassman you need to identify the size of the problem by comparing it to a really big problem such as the loss of a loved one, or not having a place to live. Next you need to use your inner coach, or positive self talk, so that your reaction matches the size of the problem.

A big deal was made each afternoon about going to the Superflex academy, where students would put on their imaginary Superflex capes and practice whole body listening
as they spent one to three weeks learning about each character. A new character was always introduced by reading from one of the Superflex books or a related work of children’s literature. The students would become social detectives while they looked to identify the Unthinkable in the story. After the story was read they would color a picture of the new Unthinkable to add to their individual Superflex strategy books. Strategies to defeat that character were discussed on the second day and the students’ completed worksheets to add to their books that stated each strategy. The order of introduction to each Unthinkable character was determined based on the behavioral needs of this specific class. Each Unthinkable, the power they have over your brain, and the Superflex strategy to defeat it is shown in Table 7 in the order that they were introduced to the class. For a more detailed description including the character illustration, please refer to “Superflex… A Superhero Social Thinking Curriculum” (Madrigal & Winner, 2008).

Table 7: The Unthinkable, Their Power, and Strategies to Defeat Them

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unthinkable</th>
<th>Powers</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glassman</td>
<td>Causes huge reactions to little problems</td>
<td>Identify the size of the problem by comparing it to a bigger one and use positive self talk so that your reaction matches the size of the problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock Brain</td>
<td>Gets stuck on and only sees his own idea or opinion so that a problem cannot be solved</td>
<td>Take a deep breath, use positive self talk, try another way to solve the problem so that it fits in with other’s plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brain Eater</td>
<td>Makes it hard to focus because he is easily distracted</td>
<td>Focus on the group by using whole body listening or a sensory tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Invader</td>
<td>Invades people’s personal space</td>
<td>Use the one arm rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Jean</td>
<td>Is mean and bossy</td>
<td>Think about what you are going to say, will it hurt someone’s feelings? Keep mean thoughts in your brain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Hare-y</td>
<td>Has so much energy that he can distract others around him</td>
<td>Take a few deep breaths, look at how the rest of the class is acting and try to match it, use whole body listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grump-Grumpaniny</td>
<td>Sees everything as negative and bad</td>
<td>Think about the person you are interacting with, are they friendly or mean? Ask yourself if you are being negative and find a positive way to think about it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body Snatcher</td>
<td>Gets you to turn away from where your focus should be</td>
<td>Ask yourself where your body should be and use whole body listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroyer of Fun</td>
<td>Is overly competitive, cheats, or makes his own rules</td>
<td>Use positive self talk to remind yourself of the size of the problem and that everyone should have a good time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-sided Sid</td>
<td>Only talks about himself &amp; his thoughts</td>
<td>Think with your eyes to determine what others and thinking and look for clues about their level of interest, ask questions to find out about others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worry Wall</td>
<td>Worries so much he checks out</td>
<td>Use a calming strategy and find a happy thought to change how you are thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-Wonderer</td>
<td>Shows no interest in others or their ideas</td>
<td>Listen to the person talking and ask Wh-questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wasfunnyonce</td>
<td>Does not recognize appropriate times for humor</td>
<td>Ask yourself if this is a funny moment or a serious moment, only use the joke or funny comment once</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Twister Meister</td>
<td>Twists the topic to his own interests</td>
<td>Turn off your me button and ask the other person questions when they are not interested in what you have to say</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activities designed to practice Superflex strategies or identify an Unthinkable followed. For example, a game called Hoops was played in the classroom to be aware of Space Invader. Hula hoops were placed on the floor of the classroom and students had to walk around the room while the music played without touching anything or anyone. If they bumped into a table or touched another person they had to sit out until the next round. When the music stopped they had to find a hoop to stand in. Each round a hoop was taken away so the students had to be very aware of their space and figure out how to
share one hoop without touching someone else by putting one foot in it. When Glassman
was introduced the students were learning about greater than and less than in math. Big
and little problems and big and little reactions were taught by creating an “alligator
mouth” with two long, wooden blocks, and triangles for teeth that was placed on the floor
between two hula hoops. Examples of big and little problems and reactions from a prior
Glassman lesson were written on paper and placed in a hat. Depending on the paper
pulled, the student either stepped into the hoop that the alligator mouth opened to,
indicating that the problem or reaction was big, or stepped into the hoop at the closed end
of the mouth, indicating that the problem or reaction was small.

Once the lessons on one Unthinkable character were completed, the activity time
would be used to review each character, their traits, and strategies to defeat them. One
way to do this was to refer to their Superflex books that they were creating. Another way
was to play Superflex headbands where each student wore a headband with a picture of
an Unthinkable attached that they could not see, so that they had to ask yes or no
questions about their character until they had guessed who they were. Superflex charades
was another popular activity for reviewing each Unthinkable character.

While 45 minutes in the afternoon of four days each week was set aside for direct
instruction in the above describe social skills and self-regulation strategies, reference to
them was ongoing. For example, when a student was stuck on the fact that he didn’t like
what was offered for hot lunch the staff would prompt “what’s your strategy to defeat
Rockbrain?” Referring to the behavior as an Unthinkable character was a way to address
the behavior, not the child, as a problem to be solved. When an individual’s engine was
too high for learning he was prompted “do you need to check your engine?” The
language and lessons of the curricula were consistently used by the staff and students alike and opportunities to practice strategies were taken advantage of throughout each day.

**Data Collection**

Baseline data for each individual were taken from four sources: IEP present levels upon entering the program, prior suspensions, Daily Progress Report (DPR) data, and Dunn’s Sensory Profile (1999). The IEP present levels represented the behaviors that resulted in the student’s placement in this classroom for individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders. If suspension reports were accessible, they were used to show the number of times the individual’s behavior in their previous environment resulted in suspension from school. Both of these were collected from documents generated in their prior educational placement. Individual DPR data represented the individual’s ability to follow each of the five classroom rules during every activity throughout the day during the first four weeks of instruction in expected classroom behaviors. Dunn’s Sensory Profile (1999) was also completed for each individual during the first month to determine issues in and areas of sensory processing deficits which might impact classroom behavior.

At the end of the second trimester, quantitative data were generated from the following sources: the daily progress report (DPR), teacher-made physical aggression data, suspensions, and Dunn’s Sensory Profile (1999). What was collected by each data source and how it was taken is described below.

The DPR measured an individual’s ability to follow each of the five classroom rules during every activity throughout the day. The rules, how they are defined, and other
assumptions about each rule were shown in Table 4. An example of a student’s DPR can be found in Appendix G. Individual’s earned a stamp for their ability to follow each rule during each activity, and those with 80% of their stamps at the end of the day earned a prize from the prize box. This was one of the positive behavior supports in place. A three strikes and you’re out protocol was applied to each rule, meaning that if you were redirected a third time for the same behavior, you would miss the opportunity on your DPR. Individuals began each day with a clean DPR, and stamps were awarded throughout the day by all classroom staff interacting with the individuals. If an opportunity for a stamp was missed, a mark was made in place of the stamp by the staff member observing the behavior. At the end of each day one of the paraprofessionals totaled the stamps for each individual and wrote that total on the DPR in order to indicate whether 80% was achieved or not. Next, the individual data was recorded on a data collection sheet indicating the number of missed opportunities for each classroom rule for each child. This data was then entered into an Excel database by myself, the classroom teacher.

When individual behaviors required additional information from what was recorded on the DPR, it was reported in one or more of the following ways: a teacher-created database for physically aggressive behavior or Suspension Reports, which were mandated by the State when an individual was suspended from school for any amount of time. The physical aggression database was used to record specific outbursts of physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, and throwing objects at people. This form of data collection was used when students acted out aggressively and impulsively, but were able to make a good choice and turn it around so that a suspension was not required.
Suspension reports must be completed any time a student is suspended and after an excessive amount of suspensions a manifestation determination must be held in order to determine corrective action either in the form of a more restrictive placement or an individual behavior support plan. A blank suspension form is shown in Appendix H.

Dunns *Sensory Profile* (1999) was used in previous studies as a baseline measure for individual sensory needs, and as an outcome measure of whether researchers had sufficiently modified the environment or taught appropriate strategies to meet the participants needs so that their sensory seeking behaviors did not disrupt the learning of themselves or their classmates (Barnes, et al. 2008; Dorman, et al. 2009; Watling & Dietz, 2007). The Sensory Profile measures an individual’s threshold for stimulation and the ability to self-regulate across four specific sensory processing inputs: auditory, visual, movement, and touch. It also measures behavior across four quadrants of sensory processing patterns: registration, seeking, sensitivity, and avoiding. Scores represent these factors ranging from much less than others, less than others, typical to others, more than others, and much more than others with others referring to typical peers. For example, if an individual scores much more than others in the seeking quadrant and has the same score in the sensory processing sections of movement and touch, this indicates that the individual needs high levels of sensory input in these areas and will actively seek it. In the classroom environment, the individual may be disruptive as a result by rocking in a chair, getting up more than others, and constantly fidgeting. For more information about sensory processing inputs and patterns and how they impact individual behaviors in the classroom and other environments, refer to the Sensory Profile School Companion (NCS Pearson, Inc., 2006).
Qualitative data were culled from IEP present behavior levels and progress toward behavior goals, and suspensions. The IEPs described specific social, emotional, and behavioral present levels for each student. Individual’s participating in the PEBBL program must have a behavior goal because it was their behavior that resulted in their placement in the program. Progress on IEP goals was updated once every trimester and this data was used to evaluate the specific behaviors of each individual and progress in those areas. Similarly, suspension reports described specific behaviors such as physical aggression, property destruction, profanity, and exposure of private body parts to others.

**Research Design and Data Analysis**

This study was a mixed methods classroom case study with the teacher as the researcher. All of the data taken and examined herein existed or were taken as part of the regular practice within the program. Data for this study were taken from the first two trimesters of school, beginning the second week of August and ending the last day of February. The selected data provided information about how receiving direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies within a positive behavioral support environment impacted each individual enrolled in the PEBBL class. During the time of the data collection individual’s participated in as many as seventy-five forty-five minute lessons depending on their attendance record. Because this was a case study within a classroom that is itself a behavioral intervention, it can be said that if the data showed an improvement in individual behaviors, then the program was effective in modifying classroom behaviors.

The DPR data were useful for identifying trends in behavior and problem areas. For example, it showed if an individual had more difficulty during specific activities such
as recess, which was less structured, or an academic activity that may have been more challenging. It also revealed difficult days of the week. A common example was Monday following a weekend routine that was naturally less demanding. General areas of problem behaviors could be identified by looking at rule categories where individuals missed more opportunities, and assumptions could be made as a result. For example, “respect peers” was defined primarily as keeping hands and feet to one’s self, and secondly as using respectful words. If an individual’s data revealed that 80% of their missed opportunities each day were under the rule category of respect peers, we had helpful information regarding the behavior that needed to be addressed.

Data from physical aggression and suspension reports were used to show the intensity and frequency of aggressive or extremely inappropriate behaviors throughout the study. The number of suspensions acquired by the end of the second trimester were compared to any acquired in the students prior placement. The descriptions of the behaviors from prior to current placement were also evaluated for consistencies or changes in types of reportable behaviors. If there were less or no reported incidents over time this would indicate that the curricula had a positive impact on the individual’s classroom behavior.

Dunn’s Sensory Profile (1999) was used to gather baseline information regarding individual sensory needs and behaviors. It was completed for each student again at the end of the second trimester to determine if there was a visible change in their ability to process sensory phenomena within the classroom environment. If individual levels decreased, especially if they moved from a category of having more or much more of a sensory response to one that was similar or less than others, it could be said that the
environment was meeting their specific sensory processing needs. This would make a powerful statement about the environment because individual sensory systems do not change, but individuals can learn self-regulation strategies, and their environment can be modified, so that their sensory needs are being met in a way that enables them to focus on the task at hand in a behaviorally appropriate manner.

The present levels reported under the social, emotional, and behavioral section of each student’s IEP were used to compare the behaviors observed in both the past and present classroom environments, and to evaluate the effects of the present program on those behaviors. Specifically, the behaviors listed in Table 3 of this chapter were compared to behaviors reported in the most recent IEP. If the student had an IEP prior to the New Year, or their annual had not yet taken place, present levels were written for that individual using the IEP format so that a direct comparison could be made between levels of behavior in the prior environment to those in the present environment within the past two months. Progress toward IEP behavior goals were also evaluated.

All of the above described data were also looked at as a whole to reveal behavioral trends. Ideally, the baseline data would show the heightened level of behaviors expected as a result of the individual’s placement in a program for individuals with emotional disturbance and emotional behavioral disorders. If the curricula were effective, the data should reveal a decrease in undesired behaviors and an increase in desired ones over time.
Chapter 4: Results

Six first-grade and four Kindergarten boys participated in a class-wide positive behavioral support program that included direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies. Targeted behaviors that resulted in their placement in this program included physical aggression toward people and property, and excessive and disruptive off-task behaviors. Results of the study indicate that the combined curricula had a positive impact on individual behaviors when compared to their prior classroom placement and over time in their current program. Whole class data from each of the measurements taken is discussed first, followed by individual results.

Whole Class Data

Sensory Profile. The results of the Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) are discussed first in order to establish sensory processing problems amongst the students which would support the need for instruction in self-regulation strategies that includes a sensory diet. The number of suspensions accrued by individuals in their prior environments is discussed next, followed by the whole class trend of physical aggression in their current placement. Finally, whole class averages in the ability to follow each of the five classroom rules during the first and second trimesters is reviewed.

The Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) can tell us many different things about an individual’s ability to take in and manage sensory input that influences their ability to carry out daily activities. For example, if an individual scores much more than others in the seeking quadrant and has the same score in the sensory processing sections of movement and touch, this indicates that the individual needs high levels of sensory input in these areas and will actively seek it. In the classroom environment, the individual may
be disruptive as a result by rocking in a chair, getting up more than others, and constantly fidgeting. For the purpose of this study, the Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) was used to show whether the participants had sensory processing issues, and if they had learned to appropriately meet their sensory needs within their classroom environment as demonstrated by a shift in scores from the baseline to the end of the second trimester.

Figure 2 shows the number of students from this class of ten whose sensory processing patterns were similar to, more than, and much more than those with typical sensory processing patterns in all areas tested. It also shows the shift, if any, from the fourth week of school to the end of the second trimester indicating whether individual sensory needs had been met enough to have a visible and positive impact on their ability to appropriately carry out daily activities.

Figure 2. Whole class Sensory Profile scores from the fourth week of school and the end of the second trimester.
Suspensions. Because all of the students were referred as a result of emotional and behavioral issues, five out of ten of them were suspended one or multiple times from their previous placements. While it is likely that the PEBLL program does not suspend students as readily as a district because it is designed to handle specific behaviors, an individual would be suspended if

   a) They were endangering themselves or others,

   b) The behavior had been demonstrated a concerning number of times and the staff believed a suspension might send a clear message.

Figure 4 shows the number of suspensions accrued by students in their previous placements. All of the suspensions were a result of physical aggression toward others, either through throwing dangerous objects or using fists, kicking, or biting. Individuals who had no prior suspensions are not included.

![Prior Suspensions](image_url)

**Figure 3. Number of Suspensions Accrued in Previous Placement**
Physical aggression. No students were suspended during the first and second trimesters in their current placement. While some aggressive behaviors were observed, none met the criteria described above that would lead to a suspension. Each event of physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, biting, and throwing things at others was recorded as it occurred. During the seventeen day baseline period nine out of ten individuals engaged in thirty-eight reportable incidents of physical aggression. During the forty-eight days of the first trimester to follow eight of ten individuals engaged in fifty incidents. Finally, six of ten individuals engaged in eighteen reportable incidents of physical aggression during the forty-seven days of the second trimester. There were 112 days in the first and second trimesters, the average number of incidents of physical aggression is shown in Figure 5 in eight day increments in order to demonstrate the whole class trend in physical aggression.

![Physical Aggression](image)

**Figure 4. Whole Class Incidents of Physical Aggression**
Classroom rules. Finally, all but one student increased their ability to follow each of the five classroom rules over the two trimesters. Eight out of ten students increased their ability to respect peers and seven out of ten increased their ability to respect peers. Three out of ten students increased their ability to respect property, but seven out of ten student’s ability never dropped below 90%. Eight out of ten students increased their ability to stay on task and six out of ten increased their ability to check their engine while eight out of ten student’s ability never dropped below 90%.

Overall classroom ability to follow each of the classroom rules is shown in Figures 6 through 10.

![Respect Peers](image)

**Figure 5.** The average percent of the time the whole class was able to respect peers during each month of the first and second trimesters.
Figure 6. The average percent of the time the whole class was able to respect adults during the first and second trimesters.

Figure 7. The average percent of the time the whole class was able to respect property during the first and second trimesters.
Figure 8. The average percent of the time the whole class was able to stay on task during the first and second trimesters.

Figure 9. The average percent of the time the whole class was able to check their engine during the first and second trimesters.

Individual Results

Individual data describes behaviors that resulted in placement in a behavior program, initial IEP behavior goals, progress toward those goals, and new behavior goals.
and progress if established prior to the end of the second trimester. Individual data also shows baseline and end of the second trimester average abilities to follow each of the classroom rules. If an individual’s ability to follow a rule never dropped below 90% during the two trimesters, then the data was not included below. The average ability to follow each rule was based on a possible total of fifteen opportunities per rule each day. Baseline data for nine of the ten students represents the first seventeen days or four weeks of school. One student, David, entered the program during the first trimester and the timeframe of his baseline is discussed under his section below.

Adam. Adam entered the program as a first-grader having completed Kindergarten at his District school the prior year. Adam qualified for services under the categories of Autism and Speech/language impaired. According to his IEP, Adam engaged in excessive physically aggressive acts that included yelling, hitting, kicking, throwing things at others, and property destruction. His IEP behavior goals upon entering first grade can be summarized as follows:

- Instead of hitting to get attention or express his dislikes, Adam will express himself appropriately throughout 70% of his school day. The baseline stated that Adam hit an average of two times per day.

- Instead of engaging in disruptive behaviors to avoid or escape an activity, Adam will use a break card or request a break for 70% of the opportunities presented. The baseline stated that Adam turned over or threw a chair after five to ten minutes of seated group work.

Adam’s annual IEP was held early in the first trimester and he had met both of the behavior goals previously written. Furthermore, there were only five incidents of hitting,
all occurred during the baseline and accounted for 8% of the classroom incidents, none occurred after that. Adams DPR data indicated that he still struggled to stay on task throughout the day, therefore a new goal was written for Adam to be on task for 80% of the school day. Since Adam’s current off task behaviors did not include disruptive or aggressive behaviors, this component was not included in the new goal. At the end of the second trimester, fifteen weeks after this goal was written, Adam had met this goal.

Adam’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for three of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 11.

![Adam's Ability to Follow the Classroom Rules](image)

**Figure 10.** The average percent of time that Adam was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first seventeen days of school, to the average rate of success during the final
month of the second trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect peers improved by 13%, respect adults improved by 8%, and stay on task improved by 23%.

Billy. Billy entered the program as a first-grader having completed Kindergarten at his District school the prior year. Billy qualified for services under the categories of Other Health Impaired and Emotional Disturbance. According to his IEP, Billy engaged in excessive physically aggressive acts that included hitting, biting, and threats to do physical harm. Billy was also unable to follow directions, classroom rules, or routines on most occasions. His IEP behavior goal upon entering first grade can be summarized as follows:

- Instead of noncompliance or aggression to get his way, Billy will cooperate and use his words 80% of the time. No baseline was provided, but Billy was suspended almost a dozen times from his Kindergarten placement.

Billy’s annual IEP was held at the end of the second trimester. At the end of the first trimester Billy had met his behavior goal, but early in the second trimester Billy experienced a sharp decline in his behavior so that by the end of the second trimester his ability to be compliant and not aggressive was at just 77%. Additionally, during the first trimester Billy’s incidents of physical aggression accounted for 10% of the classroom total, but during the second trimester they accounted for 22%. As a result, two new behavior goals were written and can be summarized as follows:

- During unstructured activities such as recess, using the bathroom, and bus rides, Billy will be able to gain peer attention in appropriate ways.
• While playing or working with peers, Billy will cooperate with others instead of competing with others.

Billy’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for three of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 12.

![Figure 11: Billy's Ability to Follow the Classroom Rules](image)

**Figure 11.** The average percent of time that Billy was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first 17 days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect peers improved by 18%, respect adults improved by 9%, and stay on task improved by 16%.

**Cole.** Cole entered the program as a first-grader having completed his first two trimesters at his district Kindergarten, after which he was home schooled due to daily
disruptive and violent behaviors that resulted in more than two dozen suspensions. Cole qualified for services under the category of Emotional Disturbance. According to his IEP, Cole had temper tantrums that included profanity, throwing chairs and other classroom objects, and physical aggression toward the staff and students. His IEP behavior goals upon entering first grade can be summarized as follows:

- Instead of throwing a tantrum, Cole will use self-regulation strategies in 4/5 opportunities over a one month period. The baseline stated that he had a tantrum 2-3 times each week during which the classroom would be evacuated.

Cole’s second trimester progress reported that he had met his behavior goal, in fact he had just two tantrums during the second week of school, and none after that. At the time this chapter was written, Cole’s annual IEP was in draft form. A new behavior goal was proposed to increase Cole’s time on task to 80%, and as a result of no physical aggression and just the two early tantrums, it would be recommended that Cole return to his district special day class (SDC) for second grade.

Cole’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for three of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 13.
Figure 12. The average percent of time that Cole was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first 17 days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect peers improved by 9%, respect adults improved by 13%, and stay on task improved by 20.5%.

**David.** David entered the program at the start of the twelfth week of school. He came from a district Kindergarten and qualified for services under the category of Speech and language impaired. According to his IEP, David was defiant and engaged in violent behaviors that endangered himself and his classmates. David was suspended six times during his first three months of Kindergarten. His behavior goal can be summarized as follows:
• When frustrated, David will self-regulate undesired behaviors such as whining and defiance with no more than two prompts in order to complete tasks with 80% accuracy. The baseline stated that David’s ability to self-regulate was like a roller coaster with a low of 23% of the time and a high of 70%.

On his first day in the program David refused to complete any work during morning centers. As a result he was not allowed to go out to recess and play. During this time he had a tantrum, threw a chair, and threw his shoes at the teacher. When instruction resumed the tantrum stopped, but again he refused to do any work. During lunch recess he remained inside and engaged in unsafe behaviors so that he needed to be restrained by the staff to ensure he did not hurt himself or others. This struggle continued throughout the rest of the day. At the end of the day he had to be escorted by two adults and put on the bus. He was told that tomorrow would be a better day and that all he needed to do was complete his tasks and he would earn all of the privileges that he saw his peers get. The second day of school David returned and earned all of the privileges without a single tantrum. The only other tantrum David had during his first two trimesters was the first day back after Christmas break.

David’s annual IEP was held during his ninth week of attendance in the program. He had met his prior IEP goal, but because we knew that he had the potential for violent tantrums, a goal was written for David to use self-regulation strategies when frustrated or disappointed rather than be disruptive in 2/3 opportunities. By the end of the second trimester David had met this goal.

David’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The percent off opportunities earned for all
rules on David’s first day of school, and the average percent of opportunities earned each month during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 14.

Figure 13. The average percent of time that David was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during his baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during his first month of school in November, to the average rate of success during the final month of the second trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect adults improved by 10%, and stay on task improved by 7%.

**Eddie.** Eddie entered the program as a Kindergartner who completed two years of preschool in a county program for individuals with developmental delays and learning handicaps. Eddie qualified for services under the categories of Speech/language impaired and Autism. According to his IEP, Eddie demonstrated a lot of anger and defiance which frequently led to throwing chairs. Eddie’s only behavior goal upon entering Kindergarten can be summarized as follows:
Following an organized activity which includes a strong proprioceptive component, Eddie will willingly participate in and complete three table top activities without protest. The baseline stated that Eddie refused to participate 80% of the time.

Eddie’s second trimester progress report stated that Eddie had met his behavior goal in the terms that it was written so that he would participate in three table top activities without verbal protest. The comments however noted that he required an average of three verbal prompts every fifteen minutes to stay on task. At this time his annual IEP was in draft form and a new goal would be proposed for Eddie to remain on task for fifteen minutes with no more than one prompt. Eddie’s acts of physical aggression accounted for 10% of the classroom total during the first trimester and there were no reported incidents during the second trimester.

Eddie’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for three of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 15.
Figure 14. The average percent of time that Eddie was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first 17 days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect peers improved by 22%, respect adults improved by 10%, and stay on task improved by 25%.

**Francis.** Francis is the only second year student in the program. Last year he entered the program as a Kindergartner who had completed two years of preschool in a county program for individuals with developmental delays and learning handicaps. He was now a first grader and this was his second year in the program. Francis qualified for services under the categories of Emotional Disturbance and Speech/language impaired. When Francis entered the program as a Kindergartner his IEP indicated that he was referred to his current placement for temper tantrums and an inability to follow directions or the classroom routine. He had two behavior goals upon entering Kindergarten, one task goal
and one for sustained peer interaction that included sharing and turn taking. Francis had met both of these goals by the time of his annual IEP but another behavior goal was written to address the main behavior concern at that time, it can be summarized as follows:

- When frustrated with a task or not getting his way, Francis will use calming strategies to be able to accept the circumstances within five minutes and without perseverating on it more than three times in 4/5 opportunities. The baseline stated that he became frustrated an average of once a day, would tantrum from thirty minutes to three hours, and perseverate on the issue for the rest of the day.

By the time of Francis’ annual IEP he had made progress, but had not met the goal to use a calming strategy to accept the circumstances on most occasions. After working with Francis for a year, the staff agreed that it was very difficult to identify his yellow zone, and that he jumped from the green to the red zone without warning. For this reason, a new goal was written for Francis to state his anger triggers and identify yellow zone feelings in order to initiate a calming strategy. By the end of the second trimester Francis’ progress report stated that he was using calming strategies and was able to calm down within two minutes, however it also reported that Francis’ behavior had been very stable during the second trimester meaning that Francis was not frequently upset.

Francis’ ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for three of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 16.
Figure 15. The average percent of time that Francis was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

These data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first 17 days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect peers improved by 6.5%, respect adults improved by 13%, and stay on task improved by 19%.

**Gio.** Gio entered the program as a first-grader having completed Kindergarten at his District school the prior year. Gio qualified for services under the categories of Speech and Language Impaired. According to his IEP, Gio was oppositional, defiant, yelled excessively, and engaged in physical aggression toward peers and adults. Gio was suspended nine times in his Kindergarten year for physical aggression toward peers. While Gio had an IEP and was referred for services, he had no IEP goals upon entering the first grade. Gio’s annual IEP was held during the eighth week of school and two behavior goals were written that can be summarized as follows:
• When given a verbal or nonverbal direction, Gio will comply with no more than 3 prompts in 2/3 trials. His baseline at the time was from five to ten prompts to comply on all opportunities provided.

• When enduring a consequence due to a bad choice, Gio will take responsibility for his actions as expressed by responding the reparation without blaming other individuals in 2/3 opportunities. The baseline stated that on all occasions Gio refused to accept consequences and blamed external factors.

According to his progress report at the end of the second trimester, Gio had complied with directions with no more than three prompts in 1/5 trials, and he was accepting responsibility for bad choices in 2/3 opportunities.

Gio’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for three of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 17.
Figure 16. The average percent of time that Gio was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first 17 days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect adults improved by 12%, and stay on task improved by 15%.

**Harold.** Harold entered the program as a first-grader having completed Kindergarten at his District school the prior year. Harold qualified for services under the category of Speech and Language Impaired. According to his IEP, Harold was oppositional and unable to control his anger or follow directions. Harold was suspended two times in his Kindergarten year. Harold entered the program with one behavior goal that can be summarized as follows:

- Harold will follow one and two step directions within fifteen seconds after they have been given 80% of the time. His baseline was 30%.

Harold’s annual IEP was held just before the end of the second trimester. Progress toward his prior IEP goal stated that Harold was compliant 80% of the time, but only 60% of the time within fifteen seconds of the prompt. Since the DPR and physical aggression data indicated that Harold struggled most with respecting adults, a new behavior goal was written as follows: when assigned a non-preferred activity or redirected, Harold will follow through with the direction, instead of ignoring the speaker or refusing to follow through, without disrespectful gestures, in three out of five opportunities. His baseline was one out of five opportunities. Harold’s incidents of
physical aggression accounted for 18% of the classroom total during the first trimester and 22% during the second trimester.

Harold’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for two of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 18.

![Harold's Ability to Follow the Classroom Rules](image)

**Figure 17.** The average percent of time that Harold was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first 17 days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect adults improved by 8%, and stay on task improved by 10%.

**Ivan.** Ivan entered the program as a Kindergartner who completed two years of preschool in a county program for individuals with developmental delays and learning handicaps. Ivan qualified for services under the category of Speech and Language
Impaired. According to his IEP, Ivan used profanity as his primary means of communication, engaged in hitting his peers to get their attention or get an object of preference, and laughed loudly at inappropriate times. Ivan’s behavior goals upon entering the program can be summarized as follows:

- Ivan will complete one simple task from beginning to end. The baseline stated that he required hand over hand assistance on all tasks.
- Ivan will follow simple one and two step directions. The baseline stated that he required physical prompts to follow through with directions.
- Ivan will play with other children through sharing and turn taking. His baseline stated that he required constant supervision to play appropriately.
- Ivan will improve his social skills by using words appropriately. The baseline stated that Ivan used profanity rather than focus on the want or need he was trying to communicate.

Ivan’s progress reports at the end of the second trimesters stated that he was making progress, but the goals were not met. While he was able to attend to a task by keeping his pencil to paper, or using a manipulative for fifteen minutes with a minimum of five verbal prompts, the work he completed did not reflect the assignment unless he was given hand over hand assistance. Ivan was also using more appropriate language and the last report of profanity was during the second week of school, but he continued to engage in a lot of potty talk. Finally, Ivan was sharing and taking turns with his peers in play 80% of the time. Ivan’s annual IEP would be held in the middle of the third trimester, but a new task goal and following directions goal would be proposed in addition to a foal for seeking attention in appropriate ways. Ivan’s acts of physical aggression accounted for
just 8% of the classroom total during the first trimester but for 22% during the second trimester.

Ivan’s ability to follow each of the classroom rules decreased over time as indicated by more opportunities missed on his DPR. Possible reasons for this are discussed below in the final chapter. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for three of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 19.

![Ivan's Ability to Follow the Classroom Rules](image)

**Figure 18.** The average percent of time that Harold was able to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first 17 days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule decreased by the following percentages: respect peers decreased by 6%, respect adults decreased by 10%, and stay on task decreased by 2%.

**Jake.** Jake entered the program as a Kindergartner who was referred by his district. Jake qualified for services under the category of Other Health Impaired. According to his
IEP, Jake was hitting his peers, not following directions, and was not on task. Jake’s IEP behavior goals upon entering Kindergarten can be summarized as follows:

- Jake will engage in cooperative play with one to two peers for up to ten minutes three times a day. The baseline stated that sharing and imitating play with peers was very difficult for Jake.

- Given sensory support and a structured table task, Jake will complete three tasks independently with 90% accuracy. The baseline stated that Jake was very busy and did not complete tasks.

- Jake will follow one and two step directions with 70% accuracy. The baseline stated that Jake was self-directed and struggled to comply with directions.

Jake’s annual IEP was held at the end of the first trimester. At that time he had met two of his three behavior goals. Jake was compliant with adults at least 90% of the time and engaged in cooperative play with peers for up to ten minutes. Jake had made improvement toward his task goal and was on task 80% of the time during 2/3 activities. A new task goal was written for Jake to stay on task with no more than two prompts every fifteen minutes. The baseline stated that he required constant verbal and nonverbal prompting to remain on task. Additionally, Jake was engaging in inappropriate ways to get the attention of the upper elementary girls on campus. In fact, Jake was responsible for 44% of the total classroom acts of physical aggression during the first trimester and 28% during the second trimester. For example, Jake would hit girls on the playground, throw tanbark in their face, or make comments about their body parts. For this reason, a goal was also written for Jake to gain peer attention appropriately in 100% of opportunities presented. His second trimester progress report stated that he was at 90%
toward this goal with just one reported incident. His task goal was almost met with requiring no more than three prompts to remain on task every fifteen minutes.

Jake’s ability to follow all of the classroom rules increased over time as indicated by less opportunities missed on his DPR. The average percent of opportunities earned each month for two of the five classroom rules during the first two trimesters of school is shown in Figure 20.

**Figure 19.** The average percent of time that Jake was able to respect peers and stay on task during the baseline period and the first and second trimesters.

This data indicates that from the average rate of success taken from the baseline during the first seventeen days of school, to the average rate of success during the final month of the trimester, the observed opportunities to follow each rule increased by the following percentages: respect peers improved by 13% and stay on task improved by 11%.
Overall Improvement

As demonstrated above, most of the students experienced an increased ability to follow the classroom rules over the duration of the first and second trimesters. Table 8 shows the percent that each student improved from August to February.

Table 8: Individual Percentage Improvement in Ability to Follow the Classroom Rules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Respect Peers</th>
<th>Respect Adults</th>
<th>Respect Property</th>
<th>Stay on Task</th>
<th>Check Your Engine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billy</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cole</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gio</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivan</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-5</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jake</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Class Average</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Discussion

The results of this study are evidence that direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies within a positive behavioral support environment can reduce aggressive and off-task behaviors. Other important factors that contributed to the results included the structure, consistency, and predictability of the daily routine, expectations, rules and consequences. Tantamount to these was the collaboration and support of the many service providers associated with this program. The classroom SLP, OT, APE, and psychologist all used the language acquired through the use of the curriculum described herein, in addition to referring to the classroom rules, problem solving, and self-regulation strategies discussed when giving a prompt or redirection. These interactions ensured that the curriculum described in chapter three became the classroom culture.

The results of the class as a whole are evaluated first, followed by several interesting individual cases.

Whole Class

Sensory Profile. As stated previously in the results, the Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) can reveal many things about an individual’s ability to take in and manage sensory input that influences their ability to carry out daily activities. For the purpose of this study it was used to show whether the participants had sensory processing issues, and if they had learned to appropriately meet their sensory needs within their classroom environment. The baseline data of the Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) clearly showed that this group of students had some sensory processing issues. Of the students for whom the baseline Sensory Profile scores indicated greater than typical sensory processing deficits,
all achieved a reduction in these deficits by the end of the study. This means that most of the students had learned to use self-regulation strategies, and the classroom environment provided an adequate sensory diet, so that their ability to process sensory phenomena within the classroom appeared similar to others. For example, an individual whose baseline scores indicated that his response was much more than typical peers in the avoiding quadrant and auditory sensory category, had learned to use the head phones that were available in the classroom toolbox during small group activities. This resulted in him no longer avoiding tasks by crawling under tables or going to the engine room during times when the volume in the classroom was disturbing to him so that his overall time on task and productivity increased.

Although some studies used the results of the Sensory Profile to create appropriate sensory diets for the participants (Dorman et al., 2009; Watling & Dietz, 2007), the measure was not used for this purpose in this program because rich sensory diets were embedded within the program. During the first month of the school year students were encouraged to experiment with a variety of sensory inputs while the staff observed. If individuals were selecting activities or tools that did not promote a just right engine for learning, then the staff would steer them toward something they had observed to be more effective, until ultimately each student knew what they needed to be calm and on task.

**Physical aggression.** Half of the students were suspended from school in their prior classroom placements due to physically aggressive acts. While there were some acts of physical aggression during the first two trimesters in their current placement, none qualified for suspension. Because some students saw suspension as an escape, and
because this was a behavior program designed to proactively teach appropriate behaviors rather than react to inappropriate ones, only specific or many events warranted a suspension. For example, if an act of physical aggression was so intense that it endangered the student or someone else resulting in a physical restraint, then the individual would be suspended. Additionally, if a specific behavior arose repeatedly such as the excessive use of profanity, stealing from the classroom or peers, or ongoing property destruction, then the team might decide that it was time to suspend in order to send a stronger message. This being said, it is possible that the school districts suspended more readily in the event they were not staffed or able to apply strategies to teach replacement behaviors or safely accommodate aggressive students, however no students were suspended from their current placement.

According to their IEP’s, all of the students engaged in acts of physical aggression within their prior placements. This included hitting, biting, kicking, spitting, and throwing chairs or other objects. Interestingly, only one student entered the program with an IEP goal that specified “instead of aggression” and included a baseline of hitting an average of two times a day. For this reason, it is difficult to compare the number of incidents of physical aggression in their prior placements to the first two trimesters of this study. However, the lack of suspensions and decrease in reportable incidents of physical aggression over time are likely indicators that all students made progress in this area. In fact, the physical aggression data shows that the average number of incidents of physical aggression decreased from twenty-one during the first eight days of school, to an average of less than four incidents every eight days during the second trimester. Additionally, this data represents six out of ten students. So while all individuals participated in physical
aggression in their prior environments, in their current environment only six had reportable incidents during the second trimester, and just three students contributed to the data during the last month of the study.

Regardless of the possible reasons for individuals participating in acts of physical aggression or being suspended in their prior environment, the expectations and consequences for specific behaviors in their current placement were clearly stated, repeatedly discussed, and consistently followed through with. These well-established boundaries contributed to the success of these students and the lack of physically aggressive acts and suspensions.

**Daily Progress Report data.** Finally, all but one student increased their ability to follow each of the five classroom rules throughout the first two trimesters. This is the most important data to the program because it measured individual abilities to follow each rule during every activity throughout each day. It was used determine appropriate IEP behavior goals and to measure progress toward those goals. It provided information to parents and administrators regarding overall behavior and was an indicator to myself, the teacher, as to whether a student might be ready for a less restrictive environment or need a more individualized behavior plan.

While the three “Respect” rules measured externalizing behaviors, the “Stay on Task” rule also measured internalizing behaviors. For example, an individual who was experiencing anxiety or depression might escape a task due to overstimulation or as a result of being overwhelmed by their own thoughts. In these instances, it would be reflected on their DPR as missed opportunities under the classroom rule “Stay on Task”. If they earned their stamps for “Respect Peers” and “Respect Adults” during that same
activity but lost their stamp for “Task”, it most likely indicates that they were off task due to internalizing events.

During the second trimester, all students were respecting their peers at an average rate of 85% or more. Since respect peers is defined primarily as keeping your hands and feet to yourself, and secondly as using respectful words, this is evidence that they had learned some social skills and self-regulation strategies for appropriate peer interaction. All students were also respecting adults at an average rate of 90% or more during the second trimester indicating an increased ability to listen and follow directions in addition to using respectful words. This means that 90% or more of the time all students were either responding positively to redirection or intrinsically doing the right thing. The student’s ability to respect property never dropped below 80% throughout the duration of the study, which means that classroom and school property were regularly being used appropriately and rarely damaged. The lack of suspension reports and physical aggression data also supports this because there were no reportable incidents of property destruction, only minor disrespect such as pencil throwing and paper tearing. Nine out of ten students were on task 80% or more of the time during the second trimester but only eight out of ten students improved in this area. However, this means that 80% or more of the time nine of the students completed their class work and participated in whole class activities with no more than two adult prompts. Finally, everyone’s ability to check their engine never dropped below 90%. This means that they had learned self-regulation strategies to stay on task or calm down and that they were able to find the tools to accomplish those actions within their classroom environment most of the time throughout the duration of the study.
All of the above suggests that direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies within a positive behavioral environment had positive effects on whole class behavior.

**Individual Participants**

Several of the students experienced interesting results that are worthy of discussion. The individuals highlighted below were selected either because their data indicated that their experience was quite different from that of their peers, or because unique factors outside of the classroom environment may have impacted their classroom experience.

**Francis.** Francis was the only student who was not new to this class. His DPR revealed that his ability to respect peers, respect adults, and stay on task decreased during the baseline period then gradually increased up to the end of the first trimester. The classroom staff acknowledged that at the beginning of the school year, Francis was engaging in inappropriate ways of getting attention that included being disrespectful to peers who had a preferred item or were receiving positive adult attention. These behaviors also caused Francis to be off task. Francis was not able to explain his sudden change in behavior from the previous school year, but the staff suspected that he may have been struggling as a result of no longer being the youngest in the class in addition to the higher expectations we had of him as the only second year student. With this hypothesis, the staff provided opportunities for Francis to be a leader and gave him positive reinforcement for his knowledge of the classroom rules and routines and his ability to help his peers. Francis’ behavior improved gradually and during the second trimester his ability to follow the classroom rules did not drop below 90%.
**Billy.** Billy experienced a sharp drop in his ability to follow the classroom rules at the beginning of December where prior to that he was on an uphill trend that peaked at over a 90% success rate. Billy was a foster child whose educational placement was confidential, meaning that his natural parents were not allowed access to him. Billy had been with the same foster family since he entered foster care a little over one year prior to the beginning of the school year. After Thanksgiving, Billy’s foster parents had received the baby girl they had always wanted to adopt. This caused Billy to be removed from that foster family for the holidays so that they could introduce the new baby to the immediate family. Billy spent Christmas with a family he had never met and returned with an understanding that he was still up for adoption. The staff believed these events impacted Billy’s behaviors greatly as evidenced by his slow progress toward being able to follow the classroom rules during the last three months of the study. Additionally, Billy’s acts of physical aggression during the second trimester account for 22% of the classroom total. The fact that his positive behaviors recovered following this event demonstrates that the direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies within a positive behavioral support environment had a positive impact on his ability to function at school despite setting events at home.

**Ivan.** Ivan had not demonstrated typical academic skills in his preschool environment such as knowledge of colors, shapes, numbers, and letters because his behaviors were so extreme that he was unable to participate in small group instruction. The IEP team agreed to placement in this early intervention behavioral program with the hope that if the behaviors could be shaped, his academic abilities would be known. Ivan was the only student entering this Kindergarten program without the above described
basic academic skills. At first the staff focused on getting Ivan accustomed to the classroom routine so that he was transitioning from one task to another and remaining in the task area throughout its duration. This was accomplished within the first two months of school. Once Ivan understood the program, our expectations increased.

At first we expected him to attend to the task at hand by following along and paying attention. Eventually we expected him to complete simple tasks independently such as tracing over letters and numbers or copying a pattern using blocks or other manipulatives. Ivan was also receiving private tutoring in his home twice a week.

By the end of the second trimester Ivan was not at the same level as his peers who were adding and subtracting single digit numbers and reading with fluency from Kindergarten texts. In fact, Ivan could rote count to eleven but was unable to identify any of the numbers from one through ten and he had not developed one to one correspondence. Ivan could consistently name six of the twenty-six letters of the alphabet but was unable to produce any letter sounds or write letters or numbers. Ivan was the only student who experienced a steady decline in his ability to follow the classroom rules and the staff observed that as the expectations of his participation increased and the academic content became more complex over time, he engaged in more inappropriate behaviors as a means of escape. It is important to note however that while Ivan used profanity daily to communicate in his preschool classroom, he did not use any in his current placement after the first week of school.

**Summary**

According to the four types of data examined, IEP present levels and goals, physical aggression data, Dunn’s Sensory Profile (1999), and the Daily Progress Report,
all of the students experienced positive results in at least two if not all areas of data collected. The results of this study indicate that this class-wide model of direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies within a positive behavioral support environment was effective in reducing individual acts of physical aggression toward peers, adults, and property, while increasing time on classroom tasks and the ability to self-regulate so that emotional responses were appropriately managed more frequently.

Alignment with Current Research

Research in the field emphasized that lessons and instruction must be unique in order to meet the unique and individual needs of this population of students (Cook, et al., 2003; Forness, 2005; Neel, Alexander, & Meadows, 1997; Schorr, 2003). Throughout this study, the activities and time spent on each lesson within the curriculum were selected and modified to meet the specific needs of this unique group of children. For example, the order in which each Unthinkable was introduced was determined by the most prevalent behaviors observed in the classroom. Also, much more time was spent on big versus little problems and big versus little reactions in comparison to other concepts because it was a class-wide issue and required a lot of attention.

What was done with last year’s class, what was done during the year of this study, and what will be done with next year’s students is not exactly the same, but the framework is consistent and its foundation is anchored in direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation within a positive behavioral environment. I feel that Neel, Alexander, and Meadows (1997) stated it best when they defined best practice as “a process, not a program; an approach rather than a package” (p. 11). With this in mind, the
curriculum becomes a living breathing unique operation that requires constant attention so that it transforms and evolves just like each child, not just another remedy prescribed in a text.

The research also revealed that a combination of two or more of the following strategies were most effective in teaching individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders: positive behavioral support, social skills, and self-regulation (Barnes et al., 2008; Cook et al., 2003; Farkas, et al. 2012; Forness, 2005; George et al., 2013; Gresham et al., 2006; Johns, Crowley, & Geutzloe, 2005). Classrooms for individuals with emotional and behavioral disorders within the county where I teach have been grounded in methods of positive behavioral support for at least ten years. Within the past ten years various social skills curriculum have been introduced by classroom psychologists, and the concept of self-regulation has been proposed by occupational therapists. As an observer and participant and now researcher of this evolution, I believe that the positive changes experienced by my students was a direct result of using a combination of each of these.

Finally, the research stated that instruction should be direct and ongoing (Cook et al., 2003; Forness, 2005; George et al., 2013; Johns et al., 2005). This should not seem as a surprise considering that I have experienced this approach to have had a positive impact on individual academic learning. But when I reflect on years that I have been teaching this population, I am now able to see how true this is for teaching prosocial behaviors as well, and I take the practices described herein as seriously as I have always taken my multi-modal and differentiated instructional practices. While PBS was always that foundation of my program, my use of social skills and self-regulation curriculum was loosely scheduled and inconsistent. My first year I only used the Alert Program and I
provided an engine room and a tool box of sensory tools. Students were told how to use them during the first month of school, but after that were just prompted to “check your engine”. A few years later we implemented the Zones. Each zone was described and its vocabulary was memorized so that it could also be used as a prompt to make a student aware of their emotional state. During that same year the Team of Unthinkables were introduced merely as a comic series without any follow up or discussion, but the students were completely engaged. As a result of the positive effects I observed in my students during these randomly scheduled activities, I decided to design and schedule the above described curriculum in the same way that I had always crafted my math and language arts programs. This thesis is a result of that curriculum. I concur with the research and can say that by providing thirty to forty-five minutes, four afternoons a week, for activities where behaviors were named and strategies were practiced, my students improved as much behaviorally as they did academically.

**Limitations**

The data from this study examined just one class of ten students across two trimesters. This population was small but convenient in that it was my own classroom and the parents were willing and even excited to have their children participate. All participants received direct and ongoing instruction in a social skills and self-regulation curriculum that was implemented to meet their unique needs within a positive behavioral support environment. It was not possible to establish experimental control, or to directly compare students in this class with students in another where different interventions were in place. No comparisons were made between this class and past class populations that received similar instruction, but less of it; and no comparisons were made between past
class populations and their current placement in a classroom for second and third graders with emotional and behavioral disorders. While IEP present levels, suspension reports, and DPR data existed for previous program participants in their current placements one year later, it was not possible to make direct correlations between their experience in this program and their new placement because of unknown factors, such as the impact of increased age on behaviors, and other outside factors such as home environment or changes in medications. Finally, the participants of this study would not experience a different classroom placement until their following school year when they age out of this program, so the generalization of skills acquired was not within the time frame of this study.

Despite these limitations, the results show that individuals with EBD benefited from the best practices described herein as evidenced by an overall ability to follow the classroom rules as demonstrated by the DPR data, and by the visible change in their ability to appropriately meet their sensory needs as demonstrated by their Sensory Profile (Dunn, 1999) scores. Additionally, the strategies described herein can be implemented within any classroom environment so that the reliability of this study can be affirmed.

**Implications for Practice**

Because individuals with EBD lack appropriate social skills and the ability to regulate their behaviors (Cook et al., 2003; Forness, 2005; Gage, 2013), it makes sense that direct and ongoing instruction in these skills within a positive behavioral support environment would promote positive peer interactions, the ability to listen and follow directions, on task behaviors, and self-regulation strategies to manage behaviors in the classroom. Similar to acquiring academic skills, one lesson here and there as a response
to a specific need will not provide individuals with the ongoing exposure and practice they need to acquire a new skill.

The results of this study suggest that the implementation of these practices did not just have a positive effect on the end result, but that there was a gradual increase in the students’ ability to follow each of the classroom rules during the first trimester, and during the second trimester most experienced a 90% success rate or higher. The students’ success indicated that not only did they acquire these skills, but they were using them consistently over time.

Another important component was that the classroom rules, schedule, and routines were established from the first day of school and consistent throughout the course of this study. The students always knew what was expected of them and were eager to earn stamps toward prize box and participate in the afternoon activities surrounding social skills and self-regulation. The best practices discussed in the research were not simply an addition to the program, they were an integral element of it.

Finally, while the literature reviewed for this study was comprised mostly of single case-studies of small groups of individuals and a few large school-wide populations, all were conducted in more restrictive environments. This study is unique in that it was conducted in a county run classroom on a district campus, which falls in between the least restrictive environment of a general education classroom and the most restrictive environment of a non-public or private school campus. The results indicate that the direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation within a positive behavioral support environment can have a positive impact in less restrictive environments for individuals with EBD. More importantly, it is feasible for a special
education teacher to embed such a program within the usual instructional program being implemented for students with EBD.

**Future Research**

Direct and ongoing instruction in social skills and self-regulation within a positive behavioral support environment had a positive impact on classroom behaviors and attention to tasks for four Kindergartener’s and six first graders across two trimesters in a county run classroom for individuals with EBD. Future research could expand upon this by investigating three different areas.

First, what are the effects of early intervention using these strategies with this population of students in comparison to the effects on students who enter this type of behavior program after the first grade? As a result of budget cuts, many districts are resistant to referring young students to less restrictive environments until the behaviors are so extreme they have no other choice for the safety of their students. In many cases, this does not occur until a child is in the second or third grade, sometimes even older. Also, as a result of the pressure of increased test scores general educators may be resistant to adding a new and additional curriculum to their already busy day, making it unrealistic that the appropriate intervention can be implemented at this level. Are Kindergarten and first graders with emotional and behavioral disorders who receive early intervention as described herein more likely to return to their district classrooms and experience long-term success than their peers who do not receive early intervention?

Second, future research should investigate an individual’s ability to generalize social skills and self-regulation strategies into other classroom environments over time. How much direct and ongoing instruction within a positive behavioral support
environment will result in an individual’s ability to demonstrate those skills in environments with less support? What percent of students are able to generalize those skills?

Ultimately, more appropriate behavior should result in increased academic ability. For this reason, future research in the relationship between these two is needed. The current shift toward the Common Core Standards is the government’s effort to prepare its citizens to contribute to the global economy, but the purpose of public schools has always been to foster the work force, hence the success of a behavior program should also be measured by the academic success of its participants.

**Conclusion**

While many things from the structure and staff contributed to the success of this program, I believe that the main difference between the success of the curriculum described herein and that of previous years in my program resides in three key components: direct, ongoing, and unique. Instruction in social skills and self-regulation strategies was administered directly on an ongoing basis. Additionally, these components along with positive behavioral supports were thoughtfully designed to meet the unique needs of each student. Ultimately this combination of strategies that was recommended in research, required as much energy as implementing any academic curriculum, and had a positive impact on the individuals in my classroom.
Appendices
### Appendix A: Reparation Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Reparation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name calling, hurtful words, threats</td>
<td>Apologize and say 3 nice things about them while making eye contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling others what to do (bossing)</td>
<td>Letter of apology to recipient/s specifically stating: “I am sorry for telling you what to do, I should have been _________” fill in with task the student should have been engaged in at that time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving Area</td>
<td>Spend next 2 recesses inside at seat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing pencils or other objects inside, knocking over trash can</td>
<td>Pick up all objects on classroom floor and put in the garbage or away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing objects at windows</td>
<td>Cleaning windows on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other property destruction outside</td>
<td>Pick up garbage on campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT keeping hands and feet to self</td>
<td>Write “I will keep my hands and feet to myself” 3 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking property that does not belong to you</td>
<td>50 stamps earned on DPR will be paid back to class before going toward prize box</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Individual Engine Gauge
Appendix C: Zones Posters
Appendix D: Engine Room
Appendix E: Chill Zone
Appendix F: Classroom Tool Box
Appendix G: Daily Progress Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PM</th>
<th>AM</th>
<th>Respect Peers</th>
<th>Respect Adults</th>
<th>Respect Property</th>
<th>Stay On Task</th>
<th>Check Your Engine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td># of the Day</td>
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<td>123 Centers</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Snack Time</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sound of the Day</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ABC Centers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Calendar</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Lunch Time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Daily Fact</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Story</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Theme</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Choice</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix H: Suspension Report

SONOMA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION - SPECIAL EDUCATION
TEACHER RECORD OF STUDENT SUSPENSION

DATE:  
TEACHER & SITE:  
SUSPENSION #:  
RE:  
Accumulated Days Suspended – current school year  
(Date of Student)  
Pursuant to Education Code Section 49300 et seq., the above named student was suspended from school for the following reason(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Act</th>
<th>Student Act</th>
<th>Ed-Cod</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)(1)</td>
<td>Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.</td>
<td>46950(a)(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)(2)</td>
<td>Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except in self-defense.</td>
<td>46950(a)(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, knife, blade, firearm, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession, if an object of this type, the pupil had obtained written permission to possess the item from a permitted school employee, which is conditioned by the principal or the designee of the principal.</td>
<td>46950(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>Unlawfully possessed, used, sold, or otherwise furnished, or been under the influence of, any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11052) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and that, except when either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance, metallic or represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.</td>
<td>46950(c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance listed in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 11052) of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, an alcoholic beverage, or an intoxicant of any kind, and that, except when either sold, delivered, or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance, metallic or represented the liquid, substance, or material as a controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant.</td>
<td>46950(c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.</td>
<td>46950(c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>Engaged or attempted to engage in stealing school property or private property.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h)</td>
<td>Possessed or used tobacco, or any products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigar, miniature cigars, chew, cigarettes, tobacco, tobacco, snuff, chew packs, and beard. However, this section does not prohibit use of or possession by a pupil of his or her own prescription drug.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Committed an obscene act or engaged in lewdness or fornication.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j)</td>
<td>Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia as defined in Section 11371.5 of the Health and Safety Code.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k)</td>
<td>Destroyed school property or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervising teachers, administrators, school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l)</td>
<td>Absenteeism.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(m)</td>
<td>Possessed an insecticide. As used in this section, &quot;insecticide&quot; means a substance that is so similar to physical properties to an existing firearm as to lend a reasonable person to conclude that the substance is in a firearm.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>Committed or attempted to commit a sexual act as defined in Section 261, 286a, 286, 283, 281a, or 280 of the Penal Code or committed a sexual act as defined in Section 282.4 of the Penal Code.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(o)</td>
<td>Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a pupil who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of either preventing that pupil from being a witness or retaliating against that pupil for being a witness, or both.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p)</td>
<td>Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell, purchased, or sold the prescription drug.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(q)</td>
<td>Engaged in or attempted to engage in bullying as defined in Section 23459.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>Engaged in acts bullying. For purposes of this subdivision, the following terms have the following meanings:</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>&quot;Bullying&quot; means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a pupil or a group of pupils as defined in Section 49420, 49420.3, 49400.4, directed toward one or more pupils that has or can reasonably be expected to have the effect of one or more of the following:</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>&quot;Electronic Act&quot; means the transmission of a communication, including, but limited to, a message, text, sound, or image, or a post on a social network Internet Web site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or person.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>&quot;Reasonable Pupil&quot; means a pupil, including but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her exceptional needs.</td>
<td>46950(g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Act</td>
<td>Student Act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.C. § 48900.3</td>
<td>Committed sexual harassment as defined in Section 2125. (Grades 4-12 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.C. § 48900.3</td>
<td>Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause, or participated in an act of, hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 33032.1. (Grades 4-12 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.C. § 48900.4</td>
<td>Intentionally engaged in harassment, threats, or intimidations, directed against a pupil or group of pupils, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to have the actual or reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting classroom, creating substantial disorder, and invading the rights of that pupil or group of pupils by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. (Grades 4-12 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E.C. § 48900.7</td>
<td>Made terroristic threats against school officials or school property, or both.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Specific behavior the student displayed: ____________________________

The student is suspended from school on the following date(s): ____________________________

He/She may return to school at _______ a.m. on ____________________________ (day and date)

Staff/Witnesses: ____________________________

Behavior following suspension: ____________________________

Date and time present was contacted: ____________________________

Date and time suspension was authorized: ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Action, please check one:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 In-School suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Out-of-school suspension</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student's Status, please check one:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Stayed in school without special education instructional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Stayed in school with special education instructional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Stay at home without instructional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Stay at home with instructional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: (please describe)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signature of person completing this form: ____________________________

To: Teacher's File

Adminstrator's File

Initials of Administrator: ____________________________

Date and Time Authorized: ____________________________
Appendix I: IRB Approval for the Use of Human Subjects

May 5, 2014

Dear Ms. Tensfeldt:

Subject: IRB Application # 2500, RESEARCH BASED METHODS FOR TEACHING INDIVIDUALS WITH EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE AND EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

I am pleased to inform you that your application to the Sonoma State Institutional Review Board has been reviewed and approved as Exempt A-1. Please contact Carol Hall or me immediately should you encounter any unforeseen difficulties, or make any significant changes to your planned procedures.

Thank you for your cooperation with our processes. We wish you the best of fortune as you complete your research project.

Sincerely,

Matthew Benney

Chair, SSU IRB
References


U.S. Congress, 2004, Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 108\(^{th}\) Cong.


