Needs Assessment

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Overview

My idea is to conduct a needs assessment at my workplace, a public middle school with roughly 1,000 students coming from very diverse backgrounds. In speaking with my grade-level principal, the suggestion was brought up to implement a new system of tracking and collecting data on positive behaviors in 6th grade.

Optimally, the principal wants teachers and staff to track both positive and negative student behaviors. "[A system to] track not just negative, but also positive behaviors. A system [that] would allow us a chance to collect data on both and we would be able to make informed decisions regarding what subject, time of day, type of environment, etc seems to be more or less effective for groups, sub-groups, and even individual students."

Currently, there is a system in place where teachers track negative student behaviors. As far as tracking positive behaviors, there is no official system in place. The extent to which teachers unofficially track positive behaviors within their own classrooms is currently unknown, as it varies from classroom to classroom.

There is a "need" for a new system that teachers and staff can use to track positive behaviors. Informed decisions are hard for principals and teachers to make with information solely regarding negative behaviors. These decisions become one-sided when only negative data is collected. There is a need for this new system so that positive behaviors can be better tracked and therefore used in the decision-making process.

The results from this needs assessment will help my principal identify goals, or criteria, that are important and needed in this new positive behavior tracking system. Before purchasing, implementing, and training staff on a new system, it is important for her to make an informed decision about the best system. The needs assessment will help narrow down which new system is the best fit for the current needs of our 6th-grade staff.

Part One

Google Forms Survey

First, I will be seeking the feelings and opinions of staff who work with sixth-grade students through the use of a <u>Google Forms Survey</u>. How do they feel about what is currently happening and may happen in the future in order to track positive student behavior?

Observation

Additionally, I will conduct an observation in order to collect data about possible performance problems, causes, and solutions.

Workplace Description

This observation took place in a suburban public middle school that services approximately 1,000 students. The total staff of the school is about 150; particularly in sixth-grade, there are 15 teachers and 20 other staff members who interact with sixth-grade students, the majority of which have over ten years of experience in the education field.

Performance Problem

Optimal performance for sixth-grade staff includes recognizing, documenting, and communicating positive student behaviors. Currently, the frequency of staff recognizing, documenting, and communicating positive student behavior is less frequent than for that of negative student behaviors. The goal of the observation was to collect data on positive and negative student behaviors, particularly the frequency in which they occur, the staff member recognizes them, documents them, and communicates them with home. A secondary goal of the observation is to gather information about possible causes and solutions.

Observation Procedure

Once the <u>initial observation guide</u> was created, I scheduled time to observe one of the sixth-grade staff members. This original observation guide included a two-column chart. On the left, I recorded a brief description of the student's behavior. On the right, I recorded how the staff member responded to the behavior and if a certain system or tool was used. During the observation, I tried to label each behavior as positive or negative, major or minor, and how the teacher responded (recognized, documented, or communicated). I also tallied up the frequency of each type of behavior and came up with the total ratio of positive to negative teacher interactions in response to student behavior.

After reviewing the data collected, this guide was found to be somewhat difficult to use. Originally, I had intended to label each behavior and interaction as I went, but it took too much time, so I had to do it at the end. Also, only having one column for student behavior and one column for teacher interaction was a bit tricky. Most student behavior is in response to something the teacher asked them to do. I revised the guide to include three columns, adding an initial one for the teacher's directions. On my revised observation guide, I made sure to go back at the end to label each row. During the second observation, I also included an additional label of N/A for when the teacher did not recognize, document, or communicate the student behavior. If I chose the label N/A I also wrote off to the side what the possible cause could be. Did the teacher simply not have enough time, did not teacher not notice the student behavior, etc.

Data Summary

During the observations, I was focusing on recognition, documentation, and communication of student behaviors, both positive and negative.

Recognition

According to the survey, the majority of the participants agreed that staff recognize positive student behavior. 100% of the participants said they, themselves, do this. Survey results showed that the majority of teachers recognize these behaviors with the following frequencies:

- Minor Negative: a few times a day or more
- Minor Positive: a few times a day or more
- Major Negative: a few times a year or less
- Major Positive: about once a week

Data from the two observations appear to somewhat support the survey data. Both teachers I observed did recognize both negative and positive minor student behavior multiple times throughout the hour. I didn't observe recognition of major negative or positive student behaviors.

Documentation

The majority of survey participants do not believe that staff document positive student behavior. Only 43% of participants said they, themselves, document positive behaviors. Survey results showed that the majority of teachers document these behaviors with these frequencies:

- Minor Negative: a few times a year or less
- Minor Positive: a few times a year or less
- Major Negative: a few times a year or less

• Major Positive: a few times a year or less

Data from the two observations completely support the survey data. During both observations, there were zero occurrences where the teacher documented positive or negative student behavior.

Communication

From the survey results, the majority of staff believe that staff do communicate positive behaviors with families and staff. 56% of participants said they, themselves, do this. Survey results showed the majority of teachers communicate these behaviors with these frequencies:

- Minor Negative: a few times a year or less
- Minor Positive: a few times a year or less
- Major Negative: a few times a year or less
- Major Positive: about once a week

Data from the two observations somewhat supports the survey data. Both teachers I observed did not communicate any data home to families or other staff.

Possible Causes

Lastly, the survey asked about possible causes for why teachers do not recognize, document, or communicate student behaviors. These possible causes include factors such as:

- unclear expectations
- lack of proper tools
- no standard system
- not enough time
- not a requirement
- too many other things to document

Since this was one of my revisions, I only collected data for this during my second observation. From that data, it appears to support a few of these possible causes. From what I observed, the times the teacher did not recognize, document, or communicate behavior was because they either did not notice, there was no time (the teacher was busy doing a different task), or they simply ignored the behavior.

All in all, the total ratio of positive to negative interactions was 7:17. This number only includes the interactions that were recognized, documented, or communicated. At least for these two classrooms, there does appear to be a concern because the desired optimal ratio is 4:1.

Part Two

Performance Analysis

I will seek the cause of why staff do not track positive student behavior as much as negative behaviors. Is it because of lack of skills and/or knowledge? Is it because of lack of motivation or incentive? Is it something to do with our school's setting and environment?

Has a performance problem been identified?

The problem is that 6th grade teachers are not documenting positive student behaviors in their classrooms, resulting in a lack of data for administration to make informed decisions.

How do you know a problem exists? What evidence indicates that there is a problem?

I know a problem exists because administration is receiving minimal (if any) data from sixth-grade teachers in regards to positive student behaviors. In a meeting with my grade-level principal, she is concerned that there is no standard system in place for teachers to document positive student behaviors (in comparison to a standard system that tracks negative student behaviors). The main symptom of this problem is that the work (documentation) isn't being done by the majority of sixth-grade teachers.

Identify Problem Performance

The sixth-grade teachers are not using any standard system of documenting positive behaviors in their classroom. This is causing a problem for administration because they are lacking data to make informed decisions.

Identify Performers

Performer Title

The problem is produced by the sixth-grade teachers. This group of teachers includes 12 core teachers along with numerous elective and SPED teachers.

Experience Level

Teaching experience ranges from first-year teachers to teachers with 15+ years of experience. Ages range from mid-20's to 50+. All sixth-grade teachers are state certified in their content area and possess the abilities to meet the job qualifications and expectations.

Situation

The problem occurs when these teachers do not document positive behaviors. Within a typical school day, there are many systems and procedures in place for negative behaviors including a standard behavior card that is used to document negative student behavior in the classroom. When administration wants to make data-based decisions, it is hard to do without seeing both sides of the picture (positive and negative behaviors). Situations such as looking at how certain subgroups of students are performing or behaving in various classes could better be assessed with more complete and concrete data.

Describe Goal/Ideal/Optimal Performance

Task being performed	Resulting output	Standard (how well)	
Documenting positive student behavior.		Use a standard system on a daily basis to document positive student behavior.	

Describe Deficient Performance

Currently, positive student behaviors are not being documented by teachers on a daily basis using any sort of standard system. This data is not being shared with administration, therefore it is harder for them to make informed decisions.

Check Performance Components Determine Performance Discrepancy

Standard (from step 5)	Output (from step 6)	Deficiency
Sixth-grade teachers will use a standard system on a daily basis to document positive student behavior.	Currently, positive student behaviors are not being documented by teachers on a daily basis using any sort of standard system. This data is not being shared with administration, therefore it is harder for them to make informed decisions.	A standard system that teachers can use to track positive student behaviors is lacking.

Identify Probably Causes of Performance Deficiency

Problems caused by job performers lack of:	% of problem contributed by:
Information Skill/knowledge/ability Capacities (physical/mental/emotional) Estimated Total % problem attributable to job performer causes:	5 5 0 =10

Motivational Causes of Performance Deficiency

Problems caused by motivational problems:	% of problem contributed by:
Inadequate Incentives/rewards Conflicting motives/goals/expectations Estimated Total % problem attributable to motivation:	5 30 =35

Identify Environmental Causes of Performance Deficiencies

Problems caused by environmental inadequacies:	% of problem contributed by:
Job design/Learning conditions Inadequate resources (tools/materials/supplies) Estimated Total % problem attributable to environmental causes:	5 50 =55

Part Three

Finally, I will be seeking a solution for my principal. At this point, it will not be a specific solution, but the needs will be identified and she will be able to have a clearer picture of what kind of system or tool to implement that will help teachers track more positive data. In terms of recommended training for the staff, I will present her with a rationale along with objectives and necessary prerequisites.

Rationale for Training

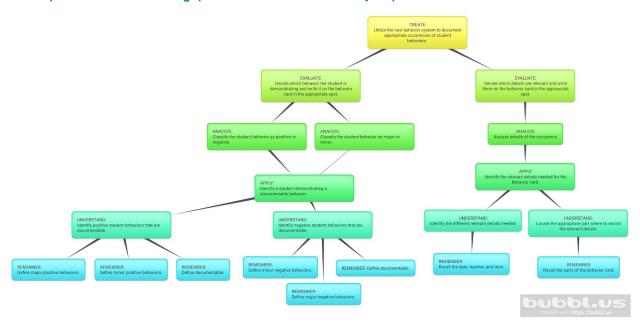
64% of surveyed staff do not believe our staff documents positive student behavior. 56% of surveyed staff do not currently document positive student behavior in any way. The survey mentioned the lack of a system to document and communicate. 67% of surveyed staff do believe that documenting major positive student behaviors are important. Only 12% document major positive student behavior more than once a week. 75% believe those behaviors should be communicated home with families and with other staff. Only 12% communicate major positive student behavior more than once a week.

Training Objectives

- 1. Given a new student behavior card that lists 10 examples of positive student behaviors, the 6th-grade staff member will memorize at least 8 of the 10 positive student behaviors listed on the new behavior card. (Remembering)
- 2. Given a new student behavior card that lists 10 examples of positive student behaviors, the 6th-grade staff member will identify a student that demonstrates one of the behaviors from the list. (Understanding)
- 3. After identifying a student that demonstrates one of the behaviors from the list, the 6th-grade staff member will utilize the new behavior card system to document the student's positive behavior by writing all required criteria on the student's behavior card (date, behavior, teacher name). (Applying)
- 4. After implementing this new behavior card system for one-quarter of the school year, the 6th-grade staff member will utilize the new behavior card system to document at least 15 total occurrences of positive student behavior. (Applying)

- 5. Given a Google Form survey, the 6th-grade staff member will reflect on the new system by sharing at least one thing that went well and one thing that could be improved. (Evaluating)
- 6. After implementing this new behavior card system for one-quarter of the school year, the 6th-grade administration will develop a plan to do all four of the following: (Creating)
 - Collect all student behavior cards (cut apart into "Golden Tickets")
 - Select at random 3 Golden Tickets per week.
 - Communicate the documented positive behaviors with the families of those students.
 - Reward the students and documenting staff members.

Prerequisites for Training (Hierarchical Task Analysis)



Appendix

I. Sixth-Grade Staff Survey

7/27/2020

6th Grade Staff Survey

6th Grade Staff Survey

I am sending out this survey to all teachers and staff who work with sixth-grade students here at North Middle School. As part of a requirement for a graduate course I am taking, I need to conduct a needs assessment which includes developing and analyzing a survey. My hope is to collect data on a topic that will be useful to our school (as opposed to something arbitrary for the sake of my course).

To determine what to address in my survey, I spoke with Mrs. Whalen who shared that, in the future, she'd like to determine a way for teachers to address positive behaviors and communicate these positive behaviors home to parents on a more regular basis. In an effort to make informed decisions, administration is looking to possibly implement a system that will provide more data about positive student behaviors.

The attached survey is an opportunity to share your opinions and feelings about which systems would work best. Your responses will help determine which option is chosen. An anonymous Google Form is attached. Please make sure to fill it out by Friday, September 20th. If you would prefer a paper copy, I have already placed a printed survey in your mailbox which can be returned to my mailbox when finished.

I appreciate your time in filling out this survey. Thank you in advance for your participation.

-Hannah Johnson

Part 1 First, I'd like to ask you a few questions about positive student behaviors, specifically recognizing, documenting, and communicating them to families and staff. Read the following questions carefully. Answer honestly and to the best of your ability.

7/27/2020 6th Grade Staff Survey

Mark only one oval per row.				
	Mostly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Mostly Disagre
Staff at our school recognize positive student behaviors.				
Staff at our school document positive student behaviors.				
Staff at our school communicate positive student behaviors with families and staff.				
Do you currently do any of the	following?			
Do you currently do any of the (Type 2: Problem; Forced-Choice; Ordinal				
(Type 2: Problem; Forced-Choice; Ordinal		Yes No		
(Type 2: Problem; Forced-Choice; Ordinal)	Yes No		
(Type 2: Problem; Forced-Choice; Ordinal Mark only one oval per row.	or.	Yes No		

7/27/2020	6th Grade Staff Survey
4.	If you answered yes, please explain how you currently recognize, document, and/or communicate positive student behaviors? Is there a specific tool that you use? Please describe.
	(Type 3: Proof; Open-Ended)
5.	What are the benefits of recognizing, documenting, and communicating positive student behaviors?
	(Type 3: Proof; Open-Ended)
6.	What is the ideal ratio of positive to negative interactions? For example, 100:6 (100
0.	positives for every 6 negatives).

(Type 3: Proof; Open-Ended)

7/27/2020		6th Grade Staff Survey
7.	posi	cribe your ideal solution to recognizing, documenting, and communicating tive student behavior. 4:Feelings; Open-Ended)
P	Part	Next, you will be given a list of job-related tasks that have to do with student behavior. For each task, rate the importance of the task to your job and how often you do the task.

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7/27/2020 6th Grade Staff Survey

8. How important is...

Mark only one oval per row.

	Low Importance	Medium - Low Importance	Medium - High Importance	High Importance
Recognizing minor negative behaviors.				
Documenting minor negative behaviors.				
Communicating minor negative behaviors with families and/or staff.				
Recognizing major negative behaviors.				
Documenting major negative behaviors.				
Communicating major negative behaviors with families and/or staff.				
Recognizing minor positive behaviors.				
Documenting minor positive behaviors.				
Communicating minor positive behaviors with families and/or staff.				
Recognizing major positive behaviors.				
Documenting major positive behaviors.				
Communicating major positive behaviors with families and/or staff.				

7/27/2020 6th Grade Staff Survey

9. How often do you...

Mark only one oval per row.

	A few times a year (or less).	About once a week.	A few times a week.	About once a day.	A few times a day (or more).
Recognize minor negative behaviors.					
Document minor negative behaviors.					
Communicate minor negative behaviors with families and/or staff.					
Recognize major negative behaviors.					
Document major negative behaviors.					
Communicate major negative behaviors with families and/or staff.					
Recognize minor positive behaviors.					
Document minor positive behaviors.					
Communicate minor positive behaviors with families and/or staff.					
Recognize major positive behaviors.					
Document major positive behaviors.					
Communicate major positive behaviors with					

7/27/2020	6th Grade Staff Survey

Part 3 To continue, I'd like to ask your opinion about a few of the tools that we use or might be asked to use in the future at North Middle School. Read the following questions carefully. Answer honestly and to the best of your ability.

10. How do you feel about each of the following tools?

(Type 4: Feelings; Forced-Choice; Ordinal)

Mark only one oval per row.

families and/or staff.

	Mostly negative	Somewhat negative	Somewhat positive	Mostly positive
Behavior Card System				
GoGuardian				
Galileo				
Google Classroom				
Hall Pass System				
Office Referral Process				
TalentEd				
TylerSIS Classic				
TylerSIS 360				

7/27/2020 6th Grade Staff Survey 11. Please explain your responses above. (Type 4: Feelings; Open-Ended) 12. If you needed to document and communicate positive student behavior, which best describes your tool preference? (Type 4: Feelings; Forced-Choice; Ordinal) Mark only one oval. BEHAVIOR CARD: One side for negative behaviors, one side for positive behaviors EXISISTING TOOL: TylerSIS, Google Classroom, etc. NEW TOOL: Class Dojo, Edmodo, Live School, etc. Other: 13. If a new system is put into place, which best describes your training preference? (Type 4b: Feelings; Forced-Choice; Nominal) Mark only one oval. Print materials (handouts, manual, how-to document, etc.) Digital materials (video tutorial, digital handouts, shared presentation, etc.) Both of the above No preference As suggested earlier, staff do not appear to recognize, document and communicate positive Part student behaviors in the same way as negative student behaviors. Why do you think this is?

4

Please select possible factors from the list that follows.

7/27/2020 6th Grade Staff Survey

Mark only one oval per row.

14. Staff are not documenting and communicating positive student behaviors because...(Type 5: Cause; Forced Choice; Ordinal)

	Possible Factor	Not a Factor
Staff do not have the skills or knowledge.		
Staff do not think it's a valuable thing to do.		
Staff are not confident with how to do it.		
Staff are unclear of the expectations.		
Staff do not have the proper tools to track it.		
There is no standard system in place.		
There is not enough time.		
There is no set requirement to do so.		
There are too many other things to document.		

Part 5 Finally, I want to ask you some questions about yourself. The following questions are optional because they may contain identifying information. If you would like to remain anonymous, please choose "Prefer not to say."

7/27/202	20	6th Grade Staff Survey
	15.	Which best describes your years of teaching experience? (Type 6: Respondent; Forced Choice; Interval)
		Mark only one oval.
		O-4 years
		5-9 years
		10-14 years
		15+ years
		Prefer not to say
	16.	Which best describes your area of work?
		(Type 6: Respondent; Forced Choice; Nominal)
		Mark only one oval.
		Core Teacher (math, science, social studies, ELA)
		Elective Teacher
		Special Education Teacher
		Office/Other Staff
		Prefer not to say

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Google Forms

II. Observation Guides

Original Observation Guide

Date:
Staff Member:
Observer:
Period / Time of Day:
Number of students in classroom:

Description of the student's behavior	How did the staff member respond to the behavior?
(major/minor) (+/-)	(R/D/C)
	Was a certain tool or system used?

Description of the student's behavior. (major/minor) (+/-)	How did the staff member respond to the behavior? (R/D/C)
	Was a certain tool or system used?

Total number of times staff member recognized minor positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member recognized major positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member recognized minor negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented minor positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented major positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented minor negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented major negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated minor positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated major positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated major negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated major negative student behavior:

Ratio of Positive Interactions to Negative Interactions:

Revised Observation Guide

Date:

Staff Member:

Observer:

Period / Time of Day:

Number of students in classroom:

	T	1
Description of teacher's directions.	Description of the student's behavior.	How did the staff member respond to the behavior?
What are students supposed to be doing?	(major/minor) (+/-)	(R/D/C/NA)
supposed to be doing.	(17)	Was a certain tool or system used?

Description of teacher's directions.	Description of the student's behavior.	How did the staff member respond to the behavior?
What are students supposed to be doing?	(major/minor) (+/-)	(R/D/C/NA)
supposed to be doing.	(17)	Was a certain tool or system used?

Total number of times staff member recognized minor positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member recognized major positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member recognized minor negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented minor positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented major positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented minor negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member documented major negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated minor positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated major positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated major positive student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated minor negative student behavior:
Total number of times staff member communicated minor negative student behavior:

Ratio of Positive Interactions to Negative Interactions: