Sabbatical Report for Paula Weston, Dyer Street School
Term 2, 2019

Focus of Sabbatical:
The main purpose of my inquiry was examining Tier 2 of PB4L and how this is being implemented in other schools with a view to seeing where our processes could be strengthened and also to be able to share ideas with other PB4L leaders.

If you are unfamiliar with PB4L please go to http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/. The themes of my report can be applied in a non-PB4L setting provided a school has clear values/expectations and methods around behaviour management.

About the Author:
I became Principal of Dyer Street School in October of 2014, having previously been Principal at Maoribank School in Upper Hutt for 3 ½ years prior to that. All of my teaching and leadership has been in schools within the Hutt Valley along with my own education, having been raised in the area also.

Acknowledgements:
Firstly I acknowledge the Board of Trustees of Dyer Street School for their continued support throughout my leadership and with their support of my Sabbatical.

To the Ministry of Education for providing for these opportunities for Principals and Teachers. This is an incredible way to reflect and refresh.

Thank you to the wonderful schools who welcomed me into their schools, often at very busy times and were so warm and giving in helping me with my inquiry. I enjoyed every school I visited and I learned from each of you. I thank Shelley O'Sullivan for recommending the Taranaki Based Schools to visit.

To the amazing staff at Dyer Street for continuing to show your professionalism and enthusiasm for our students and school community.

Finally to John Steere, my Deputy Principal for stepping in as Acting Principal while I was away. I could not take this time away without your leadership and support.

Executive Summary:
The Definition of Fidelity in terms of PB4L is the following:

The school's PB4L–SW team uses structures, procedures, and tools to ensure that the full continuum of behavioural intervention practices is selected appropriately and implemented accurately and sustainably. (Positive Behaviour for Learning School Wide Tier 1 Manual, Tier One Manual Appendix 1 Table 23).

The term Fidelity is used throughout PB4L and comes directly from the PBL language used in the United States. This term is not something that is used naturally in New Zealand but in terms of the essence of the meaning, the term "integrity" also fits into this definition.

Tier 2 PB4L sees the focus of the implementation move from common settings (like the playground) to the classroom and to focusing on students or groups of students who show patterns of behaviour that require a more focused level of support. How that support should look in a school can be as individual as a school would like. In tier 2 there are a smorgasbord of strategies and interventions and generally schools choose one or two aspects to implement well.

Data is an absolute essential within Tier 1 and Tier 2 and while there are challenges with establishing consistency and trying to avoid having teachers spending their whole day entering data, this collection of data is one of the key aspects of supporting a school's PB4L journey. The data provides the patterns that help identify focus areas for specific teaching. The data helps a team problem solve appropriate solutions to support a student with positive behaviour.

Methodology:

My main research method was in visiting schools and hearing the stories of the PB4L leaders and other school staff and students. I really wanted to see the schools in action and be able to hear the things that schools are proud of in their PB4L journey.

I had a base of questions that I asked each school but I used these as a guide only to prompt thinking. Largely, I allowed leaders to tell their story in their way and asked questions that flowed from that story.

Base Questions:

1. Describe what Tier 1 and Tier 2 looks like in your school and the timeline of implementation that you followed.
2. What methods do you use for identifying students for tier 2 intervention?

3. What is your school profile in terms of decile, U rating, management structure, ethnicity, community profile?
4. Who makes up your PB4L team(s)?
5. What documentation do you use for Tier 2?
6. What changes have you noticed over time with your tier 1 and/or 2 data?
7. How do you induct new staff?

Having been through tier 2 training, I also used the School Wide Tier Two Implementation Manual (Ministry of Education 2017) as a basis for developing my understandings around tier 2 further. I also used the text Restorative Practice Kete (Ministry of Education 2011)

As a result of my visits, I also did some reading around Incredible Years Teacher as this was a theme that came through in many schools.

Findings:
There were some definite themes that came through really strongly in all of my visits and this was well supported by the readings. The first of which was the successful and sustainable implementation of tier 1. While a prerequisite to getting onto tier 2 training is the successful implementation; the sustainability is something that schools have to ensure over time. In all of the schools I visited staff articulated the strong commitment to the successful ongoing work in tier 1. This included quite often, a relaunch of the school values each year, giving it a fresh energy and perspective so that the whole school community remains engaged with the positive direction of the school. This is something that potentially isn't done as deliberately in a non-PB4L school but could easily be implemented.

In line with what some schools referred to as a "re-launch", the importance of the continued ongoing teaching of social skills was emphasised heavily as vital to the success of PB4L. While there is often a heavy emphasis in training on ensuring that there is a plan for inducting new students and staff, the whole school needs to be exposed to the PB4L messaging. This is best done when it is reviewed regularly and when students are involved in that reviewing and delivery of the skills sessions. Some schools introduce this through assemblies or videos that students make or from the Internet that tie into their value focus. While these things to not specifically relate to tier 2, without these strong foundations, tier 2 will likely mean that more than 15% of students require a tier 2 intervention.

The supports at Tier 2 were also quite varied throughout the schools based on schools being able to design interventions that suited their students needs. This is one of the many benefits of PB4L; being able to use the philosophy that underpins the concepts of PB4L but being able to personalise the range of positive supports that suit your students (Ministry of Education, 2017). There are a few key features that are necessary to establish your tier 2 support systems. The first of which is the use of data. This is one of the prevalent themes within tier 1 also. There is a phrase that we use at Dyer Street "No Data, no problem". This is used to remind us that data is an essential element to what we are doing. It does not take away from a teacher's hunch or anecdotal noticings about students but where data recording systems are established well, the use and effectiveness of data is much richer. The data collection itself was one of the aspects that took refining and reviewing over time as schools endeavoured to get the right information but in a timely way. While all schools used their Student Management System or the PB4L database system as an electronic tracking method, many schools still find using paper forms are the easiest and even in some well established PB4L schools, they value having the data in paper form and then entered by and central person. For Dyer Street School, we found a change of Student Management System enabled us to collect data electronically in the first instance and alert the relevant staff to an incident. For example, if a student in Room 10 kicked someone at lunch time and the staff member recorded the incident, which would also include if a consequence was carried out at the time, once the incident is saved, the system we use, Musac, Edge, would then send an alert to the Principal, the team leader of the syndicate and the classroom teacher. An incident that perhaps wasn't involving something physical like being out of bounds would only alert the classroom teacher.

To unpack the concept around data collection further we can go back to the basic principles of data collection for PB4L. At a tier 1 level we collect and analyse the Big 5 data (http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/PB4L-School-Wide/What-is-involved). Data is analysed under Who/What (is the behaviour)/where/when/why. When you move into Tier 2 data, you are often focusing your lens in two different ways. Firstly, tier 2 has a bigger emphasis on teachers examining their classroom environment and practices so in your school wide data you definitely see a spike in referrals (or incidents) from the classroom. This isn't to say those incidents weren't taking place prior to this, it is the change in focus that now data is collected from the classroom as a setting. The second way in which data is used differently is that specific students might be tracked more deliberately if there seems to be an emerging issue. As stated before, a teacher's anecdotal noticings are really important and often they are the start of the process. For example, a teacher might notice that a student is leaving the classroom without permission each day. It seems to have been going on for the last few days. The teacher might then set up a simple tick sheet that they can keep with them and record

the actual number of times this is occuring. It might not be the Big 5 Data (http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/PB4L-School-Wide/What-is-involved) but it is data that can be used to help the teacher to identify next steps, or to have a conversation with the student, families or other colleagues to see where and how the student can be supported. This is a very simple example but where behaviour becomes more complex, the more data a teacher has, the better understanding we can get around what the school team need to do as a next step. Even where a student might be exhibiting extreme behaviour and requires a functional behaviour assessment, that will start from good initial data collected by the school.

Another essential element in the effective implementation of tier 2 supports is a process for the support or intervention for the student or in some cases a small group of students. Again this varied from school to school but without exception there was a clear process of what a tier 2 referral looks like that staff can follow. Within those themes and those that resonated the strongest were in two basic camps. The first was where there is a baseline data threshold where a tier 2 intervention is triggered. In most cases it was 3 major referrals. Those cases were then examined with a "common sense" approach to identify if there were any that might be anomalies for some reason or that may have been recorded as major in error. The team then design the intervention for the specific student from there. The second was where data was first looked at as a syndicate or team and a short term intervention of two weeks would be carried out by the teacher and other members of the team as appropriate. At the review of that intervention a decision would be made as to whether the referral needed to go the senior management. All schools had senior management involvement in tier 2 referrals. Several schools used the basis of Incredible Years Teacher (https://pb4l.tki.org.nz/Incredible-Years-Teacher) for the design of intervention action plans.

Our own system involves a combination of both of those systems. Teams or syndicates are definitely the first port of call for teachers to problem solve a behaviour challenge and following on from that, a Tier 2 referral form may be filled out and submitted to the Deputy Principal. From there, an intake meeting is arranged. Any staff member can attend an intake meeting and we also invite our Social Worker in Schools and one of the Educational Psychologists from our local Ministry of Education office is also invited and helped us to establish our meeting protocols. At the meeting, the referring teacher presents the case starting with the students strengths. We believe this is an essential element because as we listen to the rest of the information and form questions and ideas, we use the students strengths and interests as a basis for any intervention. My visits to schools on re-emphasised my belief that our system works well for us and that

is vital for each school to ensure that whatever process they use that it is fit for their purpose.

Now that we have unpacked the data and the way in which referrals are handled, we need to look at the specifics around what happens next for a child, their families and the teacher where a tier 2 referral has been made. Early involvement of the family is encouraged wherever patterns of behaviour occur that concern staff. There are some schools that have very clear thresholds around this. It might be that if a child has 3 or more major referrals or it might be when they have just one. Without exception, schools articulated where parents became involved around behaviour and this was an absolute mandate.

In terms of the specific interventions that schools use there are again two that were widely discussed by the schools visited. Check in/Check out (http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/Media/Files/Implementing-Tier-II-and-Tier-III-Supports-within-PB4L) was used in a number of ways. The basic premise of check in check out is to have the student interacting positively with a staff member other than their own on a regular basis around their behaviour goals. The way in which the system is monitored or set up varies based on the structures set in place by the school. Generally schools try to match the student to someone that they think will establish a positive connection. Essentially though, a full time staff member is needed. That is, someone that works at school every day. Often members of senior management are central to check in check out and having a backup person in the event someone is away, so that the student does not lose momentum or feel abandoned. The more involved all staff are with tier 2 students the easier this is, in one of the primary schools visited the Principal said that in the event that she was out of school and her back up, the office staff would step in so that the students check in occured with a positive interaction. Through some problem solving a few years ago around a specific cohort of Maori boys who were providing significant challenges to us, we began a check in check out system whereby we employed a young Maori male learning support assistant to implement check in check out with these students. This is something we have continued to do and students move in and out of this system as need be.

The second area that became thematic was Restorative Practice. The schools that spoke about Restorative Practice were either actively engaged in professional development or identified it as a next step for their school to take. Restorative practice is not just for addressing an incident but can be looked at in three ways as it relates to PB4L. The basics of restorative essentials covers the everyday informal interactions that staff and students have. Restorative circles relate to using restorative practices with a group. Sometimes these are called social circles. Finally, restorative conferences are a deeper look into something specific that involves not only problem

solving for a way forward but also a way in which a student can take responsibility for their actions or share the impact of another's actions and provide support for all involved (Ministry of Education, 2011). Where my interest and that of my staff has led us towards wanting to learn more about Restorative Practices is more around Restorative Conferences. When a serious incident occurs, let's say one in which a student has been physically hurt by another student; our immediate concern is always for the safety of the student and their well being but once we have established that, while we may monitor them for their ongoing well being, more of our focus is on establishing action plans to support the student with the concerning behaviour. This is necessary, however we want the student who has been affected to have a voice and we want our systems to better represent that.

Conclusions and Implications for Dyer Street School:
A great deal of what I learned with my visits affirmed that our direction for Tier 2 is heading in the right direction. Taking our own creative licence to design our intervention, in line with PB4L guidelines around data and consistency was an absolute theme across the schools. All schools adopted systems and processes that worked for the staff and the students in their setting. All schools had a clear approach to involving families early when a problem occurred.

Our next steps include:

Sustain and refresh tier 1 constantly:
We have a system for tier 1 that we are happy with but there are aspects of that which we have not reviewed in some time. An example of this is our continuum of minor and major behaviours. I was really impressed with the sharing around the yearly "relaunch" of PB4L and I think that is something we could explore further.

Induction of new staff:
While we have comprehensive induction documentation and a checklist of areas that need to be covered within that, our PB4L focus needs to be given more emphasis.

Restorative Practice:

This is something that we have been discussing for some time and where it relates to where something of a serious nature has occurred, the ideas around supporting students to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to give voice to the impact of the behaviour on others is a positive step for us to take.

Schools Visited:
Taranaki Schools:

Stratford Primary School
Inglewood Primary School
Hawera Primary School
Opunake Primary School
Marfell Primary School

Hutt Valley Schools:

Koraunui School
Tui Glen School
Maoribank School

References:

http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/Media/Files/Implementing-Tier-II-and-Tier-III-Supports-within-PB4L

http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/PB4L-School-Wide/What-is-involved

Incredible Years Teacher Guidelines

Positive Behaviour for Learning School Wide Tier One Manual

Positive Behaviour for Learning School Wide Tier Two Manual

Positive Behaviour for Learning Restorative Practice Kete - Book 1