



Needs-assessment and action-planning report

Greece

Project Title: SWPBS

Project Number: 606687-EPP-2018-CY-EPPKA3-PI-POLICY

Programme: Erasmus+

Activity Code:	D1.3
Title:	Needs-assessment and action-planning report per partner country
Estimated Start Date:	01/06/2019
Draft due to WP leader on:	30/06/2019
Estimated End Date of WP1:	31/07/2019
Activity Leading Organisation:	CARDET

Task Description

This task is a follow-up activity to the literature review (see D1.3) and its focus is to prepare a research report per country that

1. Identifies the current local needs on schoolwide discipline prevention and student socio-emotional supports based on survey and focus group interview data
2. Develops an action plan around schoolwide discipline prevention and student socio-emotional supports

Below, you will find a structure and template with guidelines for report development. As soon as you compile the research report, please email it to us.

Thank you!

Needs-Assessment Analysis and Action Planning for GREECE

PART A: Needs-Assessment Analysis (questionnaires and focus group interview)

1. Need-Assessment Methodology

The questionnaire was created in an electronic form and was sent with an official e-mail from the Director of the Prefecture to all the primary school directors of the Educational Prefecture of Thessaloniki (approximately 500). For the focus group interview we invited 4 primary school directors and 3 school counselors from the Educational Prefecture of Thessaloniki.

2. Needs-Assessment Results

2.1 Survey Results

The main findings from the open-ended question focused on three arguments: (a) support the teacher when dealing with behavior problems, (b) promote teacher-family cooperation, (c) allow for the teacher to inflict consequences on children with problem behaviors. Indicative quotes can be found in the detailed report (D1.2 focus group) about the focus group.

2.1.1 Short description of response rate and sample demographics

500 questionnaires in an electronic form were sent to the school directors of the Educational Prefecture of Thessaloniki. 161 questionnaires were completed (32,2%).

Table 1

Demographic characteristics for key stakeholders (N= 100)

Variable	n (%)
<i>Gender</i>	
Female	56 (34.8%)
Male	105 (65.2%)
<i>Age (years)</i>	
Median	54 (range 32-60)
<i>Professional background</i>	
School principal of primary school	151 (93.8%)
Inspector of primary school	10 (6.2%)
Other	- (%)
<i>Years of experience in this current job</i>	
<1 Year	8 (5%)
1-2 Years	25 (15.5%)
2-5 Years	21 (13%)
5-10 Years	53 (32.9%)

>10 Years

54 (33.5%)

Work experience in Education

Median

30 (range 11-37)

Level of formal education

Bachelor degree

4 (2.5%)

Master's degree

80 (49.7%)

Doctoral degree

21 (13%)

Other

56 (34.8%)

School community

Village, or rural area (fewer than 3 000 people)

43 (26.9%)

Small town (3 000 to about 15 000 people)

29 (18.1%)

Town (15 000 to about 100 000 people)

52 (32.5%)

City (100 000 to about 1 000 000 people)

16 (9.9%)

Large city with over 1 000 000 people

20 (12.4%)

Missing values: e.g. gender, n = 1; age, n = 9 etc....

2.1.1 Current views on schoolwide discipline prevention

2.1.1.1 Behavioral incidences (include Table 2)

An overall mean score for the sample was calculated for each item. Further details of the scores can be found in Table 2. Overall, the trend in scores demonstrated that the subscale items with the lowest scores was the “student substance use” item. Item with the highest scores was the “physical conflict between students” item.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics on *Behavioral Incidents*

Subscales	N	Mean (SD)
<i>Physical conflicts between students (e.g., hitting, pushing, fights)</i>	161	2.96 (.99)
<i>Verbal conflicts between students (e.g., swearing, calling names, comments related to racism/sexual orientation)</i>	161	2.81 (1.04)
<i>Psychological conflicts between children (e.g., exclusion of a student from the team, spreading negative rumors)</i>	161	2.19 (.96)
<i>Cyber bullying by using technological means (e.g., mobile phones, computers, social media, etc.)</i>	161	1.25 (.57)
<i>Student tardiness (arriving late in school, coming late from break)</i>	161	2.28 (.95)
<i>Student absenteeism (being absent from school)</i>	161	1.53 (.81)
<i>Student substance use</i>	161	1.01 (.07)
<i>Showing disrespect to teachers and peers (e.g., talking back, refusing to work, making negative comments)</i>	161	1.73(.92)
<i>Physical abuse of teachers</i>	161	1.36 (.75)
<i>Disruption during instruction (playing with objects, talking with others, not waiting his turn)</i>	161	2.63 (1.1)
<i>Severity of Behavioral Incidents</i>	161	1.97 (.54)

Response range 1–5.

2.1.1.2 Written school discipline (include Table 3)

The frequency of having a written school discipline was initially assessed. For the cases who reported to have a written school discipline, an overall mean score was calculated for each of the additional items. Further details of the scores can be found in Table 3. Overall, the trend in scores demonstrated that the subscale items with the lowest score was the “is it consistently applied” item. Items with the highest scores was the “widely publicized among....” Item.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics on Written school discipline

	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
<i>Having a written school discipline policy</i>	84 (52.2%)	69 (42.9%)
Subscales	N	Mean (SD)
<i>Is it comprehensive?</i>	84	3.63 (1.01)
<i>Is it clear?</i>	84	3.75 (.90)
<i>Is it consistently applied?</i>	84	3.61 (1.06)
<i>Is it widely publicized among administration team, staff and families?</i>	84	4.01 (1.13)
School discipline policy’s quality and usability	84	3.75 (.86)

Response range for subscales 1–5.

2.1.1.3 Effectiveness of existing discipline practices and policies (include Table 4)

An overall mean score was calculated for each of the items. Further details of the scores can be found in Table 4. Overall, the trend in scores demonstrated that the subscale items with the lowest scores was the “school discipline programs have been in reducing problem behaviors in your school” item. Items with the highest scores was the “school practices have been in supporting students with socio-emotional and behavioral needs” item.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics on the Effectiveness of existing school discipline practices and policies

Subscales	N	Mean (SD)
<i>School discipline programs have been in reducing problem behaviors in your school?</i>	161	2.70 (1.14)
<i>Policy discipline guidelines have been in guiding schools to reduce problem behaviors in schools?</i>	161	3.15 (1.17)
<i>School practices have been in reducing problem behaviors in your school?</i>	161	2.83 (.91)
<i>School practices have been in supporting students with socio-emotional and behavioral needs?</i>	161	3.30 (.92)
Effectiveness of existing school discipline practices	161	2.92 (1)

Effectiveness of existing school discipline policies 161 3.06 (.80)

Response range for subscales 1–5.

2.1.1.4 Professional development training (include Table 5)

The frequency of receiving training on school discipline programs was initially assessed. For the cases who reported to receive training on school discipline programs, an estimate the number of in-service training hours was assessed. Further details of the scores can be found in Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics on professional development training

	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
<i>Receiving training on school discipline programs</i>	99 (61.5%)	61 (37.9%)
	N	Mean (SD)
<i>Estimated number of hours</i>	87	92.57 (168.05)

2.1.2 Current limitations on promoting positive learning environments (include Table 6)

An overall mean score was calculated for each of the items. Further details of the scores can be found in Table 6. Overall, the trend in scores demonstrated that the subscale items with the lowest score was the "likelihood of complaints from families" item. Item with the highest score was the "lack of or inadequate number of personnel..." item.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics on Current limitations on promoting positive learning environments

Subscales	N	Mean (SD)
<i>Lack of or inadequate number of personnel with expertise in schoolwide prevention (e.g., school counselors, school psychologists)</i>	161	3.59 (.74)
<i>Lack of or inadequate teacher training in preventative positive-based classroom practices</i>	161	3.58 (.66)
<i>Lack of or inadequate supports within the school to help specific students with socio-emotional and behavioral needs?</i>	161	3.48 (.75)
<i>Likelihood of complaints from families</i>	161	2.27 (.88)
<i>Lack of or inadequate time for collaboration among staff</i>	161	3.43 (.71)
<i>Limitations total score</i>	161	3.27 (.54)

Response range for subscales 1–4.

2.2 Focus Group Interview Results

[Report 2-3 thematic categories identified in the focus group interview based on these parameters (refer the reader to D1.2b for a more detailed description)]

2.2.1 Main priority school needs for promoting positive and preventative learning environments

According to the findings of the Focus Group Interview the most pressing need, which must be accomplished at schools in order to promote the socio-emotional and behavioral needs of students is to create an institutional framework in the school unit related to social-emotional behavioral problems. More specifically, the main problem of schools is their disability to self-regulate and confront their own problematic/crucial issues. The lack of an official regulation, the absence of a context and a policy, which includes practices, techniques, strategies for recognizing, confronting and preventing behavioral issues leads teachers in the school unit to confuse when a negative behavior appears. They used to ignore issues about positive behavior support and discuss about them at the time of the problem is exploded. In addition, the lack of commons rules and generally the tendency of not to discuss issues about management negative behaviors leads to misunderstandings between school staff and between teachers and parents at the crucial time. So, there is an imperative need to construct an official institutional framework for promoting positive and preventative learning environments.

Another issue that should be regulated is the school - family cooperation. Results from the focus group interview indicated that parents sometimes deny recognizing that their children express behavior problems and consequently they need socio-emotional support. On the other side school network lacks a policy or a framework, which guide teachers to discuss with parents with an effective way and jointly confront the problem. School - family cooperation should be enhanced in order to be created a family - schoolwide culture related to positive behavior support. In this context parent should be informed about the school regulation function and the general institutional framework for promoting positive behavior support. Especially at the age of kindergarten entry child and his/her parents must be educated and realize that schools -from kindergarten to secondary education- is conditioned by rules and function according them. So, it is crucial to be established a continuity between the educational levels in issues related to positive behavior support.

In addition, it is essential teachers to be trained and educated in issues about negative behaviors and well-equipped in a supportive context. Finally, commitments must be guaranteed between teachers and families for class meetings and discussions about behavior support, especially with parents of “at risk” children.

2.2.2 Existing practices for supporting schoolwide discipline prevention and positive learning environments

Participants noticed several practices that are applied at schools for supporting schoolwide discipline prevention and positive learning environments. Firstly, a participant said that at the

begging of the school year the teachers' association of the school unit organize an event for staff teachers and parents, where they inform parents about how they confront negative behaviors. They also present school's unofficial regulation, they discuss how to manage and prevent together a child's negative behavior and teachers ask parents for an expected cooperation through the school year. Additional, participant noticed that both teachers and parents commit to organize weekly meetings through the school year.

Another participant described a room that is used as pressure valve children's' negative behavior. Access to this safe-equipped room have all the children, that want to externalize a behavior and not only the children, that used to express negative behaviors. All children at the room are supervised by the teacher and a psychologist. When a delinquent behavior is noticed teacher and specialist intervene to control or prevent a negative behavior.

Another issue, that discussed was the collaboration and the continuity through the educational levels. Specifically, in the majority of Greek schools, primary teachers cooperate with kindergarten teachers, discuss and recognize children that they used to express negative behaviors before child attend the primary school. Although, primary teachers are already informed about the children that need positive behavior support, most of them shows an inaction to prevent these expected negative behaviors. The preventive measures, that they used to apply to temporary avoid such behaviors are: a) to share children with negative behaviors in separated classes, b) to reinforce the supervision of these children at school, c) to prohibit children using materials (e.g. balls) that may provoke conflicts between children, d) to discuss with the child or/and the parents about his/her behavior without any other fundamental prevention.

Additional, participants agreed that the biggest barriers to promote PBS are: 1) the small outdoor space (courtyard) at schools with a great number of children, 2) the lack of knowledge and spatialization in school stuff, 3) sometimes teachers' association lacks coherence which resulted in teachers' isolation. This reality leads teacher to find solutions for any negative or problematic behavior by him/herself. 4) There isn't any common practice or guidelines for schools and families to jointly prevent or deal with a negative behavior. For example, it is a usual practice for children to play violent digital games at home and transfer these violent behaviors especially when they are at school. Families don't collaborate with educators so as confront this negative influence in children's behavior.

2.2.3 Important teacher training topics for promoting schoolwide prevention and stronger socio-emotional supports

Three topics in teachers' training are considered the most important for promoting PBS according to the Focus Group Interview. First, an educator must be trained on how to work cooperatively with children. A teacher should be aware of the beneficial team-work and

collaborative practices and applicate them in the class constantly. Within context children will experience positive interactions and behaviors.

Second, teachers should be trained on the “pedagogical management of behaviors”.

According to participants it is essential for teachers to be educated on how to prevent or how to confront a negative behavior in the class in a pedagogical manner. For example, teacher should implement a pedagogical practice in case of a negative behavior and not punish the child.

Thirdly, educators should be trained on how to promote the social & emotional involvement of students at school.

3. Main Conclusions

[Describe main conclusions on the existing needs of your context based on the above findings as well as the literature review conducted in D1.1 (see last question) (1 page)]

Conclusions of the Focus Group Interview are summarized in three levels. First, an official concrete policy related to issues about school discipline prevention practices and student socio-emotional support should be established. According to participants it is crucial the institutional framework to be reformed and enriched with parameters, which support teachers, children and families in issues related to discipline practices and socio-emotional support. The existing regulation consider to be either indiscernible or dysfunctional, resulting teachers to apply an unofficial institutional framework for promoting positive and preventative learning environments.

In this policy context, it should be included parameters related to internal function of the school unit especially for the management of negative behaviors and promote socio-emotional support.

In the third level, long-lasting and intensive training teachers should be conducted. Within context teachers’ training and collaboration with experts, like phycologists and case managers, would be constructive.

Finally, teachers, children and families should adopt positive attitudes for promoting positive behaviors, interactions and socio-emotional support in order to be created a related culture at school.

PART B: Action Planning

Action goal (What?) (E.g., Develop a schoolwide approach to promote positive learning environments)	Action step (Describe the what) (e.g., Culturally adapt the tiered SWPBIS framework in local context)	By whom?	When?	Assessment Status: Yes (Y) No (N) In Progress (IP)
Following the proposal's suggestions, we applied a questionnaire and a focus group to conduct a needs assessment.	To proceed with the preparation for each school core group for the implementation of the SWPBIS framework. For this step a needs assessment in the local context was made.	The research group of Auth is coordinating this action in Greece.	May-July 2019	Yes

