

SOUTH PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Student Support Services

FBA's & PBIP's – Frequently Asked Questions

What is an FBA?

A Functional Behavioral Assessment – or FBA – is a systematic way of trying to determine the function of a problem behavior. If a special-needs student with an active IEP is demonstrating a behavior that appears to be “impeding his or her learning, or that of others” and the function of that behavior (sensory, escape, attention, and/or tangibles?) is unclear to IEP Team members, an FBA may be recommended.

What is a PBIP?

A Positive Behavior Intervention Plan – or PBIP – is a set of procedures for replacing a problem behavior with a “functionally equivalent,” but more-appropriate behavior through systematic changes in the student’s environment. Usually this involves teaching the appropriate substitute behavior and then providing reinforcers whenever the more-appropriate replacement behavior is used by the student.

What does “impeding his or her learning, or that of others” look like?

Typically, this means behavior that is either interfering with the special-needs student’s ability to make reasonable progress toward his or her current IEP goals & objectives, or behavior that is so disruptive to the learning environment that other students’ access to the curriculum is being negatively impacted on a regular and consistent basis.

What if the function of the problem behavior is clear?

If a student with an IEP is (1) demonstrating a behavior that appears to be “impeding his or her learning, or that of others,” and (2) the likely function of that behavior is already understood, and (3) the IEP Team believes that the problem behavior exists with significant levels of frequency, intensity, and/or duration, a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan (PBIP) may be developed without conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) first. It is fairly common for a student to have a PBIP without an FBA, but only rarely will a student have an FBA that does not lead to the development and implementation of a PBIP.