



Collaborative Circles: Teachers Talking With Teachers About What Works

MCS teachers and staff are invited to participate in a new effort to bring teachers together to discuss ideas for improving classroom culture and student behavior. Circles will run from 3:00 to 4:30 in the President's Room at the MACC; click on the conversation topic to learn more and to sign up!

Monday, 10/30:
[Class Meetings &
Class Circles](#)

Monday, 11/6:
[Effective Classroom Reinforcers](#)

PBIS UPDATE

KEEPING IT POSITIVELY POSITIVE

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Positive Reinforcement, Student Motivation

The logic of PBIS calls for us to provide positive reinforcement to students who are engaging in positive social and academic behaviors, either through verbal and nonverbal encouragement or through tangible reinforcements. Some educators and parents have understandable concerns about the appropriateness of constant reinforcement and the effect it can have on students' intrinsic motivation. Let's discuss some of those concerns and potential pitfalls of positive reinforcement.

ARE WE BRIBING STUDENTS TO BEHAVE?

A common concern is that when we provide students with a tangible reinforce, we are really just bribing them into behaving. Remember, positive reinforcement should not be given to stop a student from misbehaving; rather, positive

reinforcement should be given *only after* a student has increased or maintained an appropriate behavior.

WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER STUDENTS?

When working with students with challenging behaviors, we may engage in very frequent positive reinforcement of school-appropriate behaviors. Thus, students who struggle to use positive behavior may actually get more positive attention and reinforcement than other students for whom positive and appropriate behaviors come more naturally. This seems unfair to some; however, PBIS logic operates according to the principle that kids should get what they need. Students who have negative habits will likely need more attention and reinforcement than other kids in order to establish new habits.

WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO INTRINSIC MOTIVATION?

We all want students to develop a robust sense of intrinsic or internal motivation. Research has shown that external rewards can reduce internal motivation under certain conditions. As a general rule, rewards should not be given to students for anything less than significant progress (in outcome, effort, or behavior). Positive reinforcers, when used to recognize improvement in meaningful areas, can lead to enhancements in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Key strategies to enhance intrinsic motivation include providing students with meaningful choices (student-centered learning), emphasizing mastery and growth, and focusing on student actions and behaviors, not their character or person.

Use IFEED-AV for Effective Reinforcement!

The following guidelines can be used as a framework for teachers to consider when providing reinforcement to make the reinforcement more effective. [The strategies are summarized in the acronym IFEED-AV*](#). How can these guidelines be applied to our interactions with students?

IMMEDIATELY: effectiveness of reinforcers fades the longer we wait to deliver them
FREQUENTLY: it is important to frequently reinforce students learning new skills or behaviors; remember 4:!!
ENTHUSIASM: this communicates to students that they did something truly important

EYE CONTACT: give the student your undivided attention
DESCRIBE: make sure the student knows what positive behavior is being reinforced
ANTICIPATION: building anticipation gets kids excited
VARIETY: change reinforcers to maintain their effectiveness

*from *The Tough Kid Book*, Rhode, Jenson, Reavis (2010)