

Newsletter with Information about the Classroom Management System

Dear Parents and Guardians,

7/9/18

As part of our Positive Behavior Policy, all of the students within the Multiple Learning Needs Program are part of a Classroom Management System, or Point System. As a member of the Ivymount community, all students are expected to follow rules that promote learning and maintain safety. The primary goal of the Classroom Management System is to design an environment that supports students in developing skills to abide by school and community rules. We would like to provide you with an overview of the classroom management system; many of the components to the classroom management systems are the same as last year.

Team-Based Points for Engaging in Learning

This year we are excited to introduce a team-based points for engaging in learning. Team-based systems, or “group contingencies,” have been well researched and have a significant amount of empirical support. Several benefits of team-based systems have been reported. Team-based systems:

- Increase a teacher’s ability to focus on instruction by reducing the focus on individual behavior management.
- Promote social awareness and minimize peer jealousy because all students earn the same amount of reinforcement for the same behavioral expectations
- Facilitate social cooperation and group cohesiveness
- Promote a positive school climate
- Reduce administrative time spent on developing individual student management
- Minimize individual feedback, which can be stigmatizing to some students

We will use a team-based system that provides bonus points whenever all of the students in the small instructional group respond accurately to a teacher’s direction.

Bonus Points for Ignoring Others’ Inappropriate Behavior

We have observed that many of our students engage in disruptive or unsafe behavior as a way to get reactions from their peers. This is concerning because it is difficult for teachers to ensure that the acting out student’s behavior is not reinforced. Often, this results in an increase in the intensity of the student’s behavior so that peers are targeted, additional students engage in target behaviors in reaction to the initial student’s behavior, and/or removal of the acting out student(s) from the classroom/learning environment. As a way to target this, students will earn bonus points for each instructional group when they refrain from commenting or reacting to any students who are acting out.

Safe, Classroom Behavior

In an effort to preserve a calm, quiet learning environment, when students engage in behaviors that become significantly disruptive to the learning environment, they will transition to an alternate area to complete their work before returning to the learning environment. Whenever students are removed

from the learning environment, a teacher or administrator will contact the students' parents/guardians by the end of the day to provide additional details.

Exchange of Points

Students will be able to exchange ("cash in") their points at the end of each day. There are a variety of things that students can buy at the classroom store, including tangible items and activities (e.g., computer time). If any student engages in unsafe behavior that school day (aggression, elopement, self-injury, or property destruction), he/she will not be able to cash in his/her points; however, all accumulated points will roll over to the next day.

We closely monitor student data to evaluate the effectiveness of the classroom management system. Additionally, we will transfer the total accumulated points from the students' point sheets onto their Planners, as a way to communicate point totals to you. You will also be able to see whether your child had a safe body on the Student Planner.

Homeroom-Based Incentive for Demonstrating Targeted Social Skills

We're excited to continue the class-wide incentive system in an effort to increase students' demonstration of social skills targets across the school day (e.g., transitions, within instruction, recess, and lunch). Students will have the opportunity to earn tokens, checkmarks, or stickers on a chart within the homeroom when they demonstrate the targeted social skills goal (typically, these will be goals that are targeted within explicit instruction during social skills time) or when they observe their peers demonstrating the targeted social skills goal then report this to a teacher ("tootling on a peer"). When all students in the homeroom meet a predetermined class-wide goal, the homeroom will be able to earn a reward together. For example, after a chart has been "filled up" students will be able to choose an activity to complete together (e.g., class party, watch a movie). Following mastery of the previous skill, a new skill may be targeted. As described above, team-based systems have been demonstrated to improve peer collaboration, build relationships, and effectively increase desired behaviors.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns by contacting your child's Program Coordinator.

Many thanks,

The Elementary/Middle School Team