



South Williamsport

{AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT}



January 13, 2018

New behavioral program to launch at Central Elementary

On Jan. 22 Central Elementary School teachers and staff will kickoff the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program that aims to improve how children are taught appropriate behavior.

PBIS is a school-wide initiative to teach and encourage good behavior through individual incentives and reteaching poor behavior choices. Instead of each teacher using their own rewards system, this will be used by all faculty and staff in a uniform way. Students will hear the same language and have the same expectations across the school.

In the evening there will be a parents' night at 7 p.m. in the Central Elementary cafeteria to understand what their kids will be learning.

During the day on the 22nd, there will be a celebration where the students learn what behavior will be expected of them and how the new program will work to encourage good behavior and reteach misbehavior.

Students will be shown fun videos that will effectively explain to them what is expected of them and why. The videos were created by Mr. Mike Steppe, Mr. Jimmy Girardi and their students.



The Mini Mountie is the PBIS mascot created by Mrs. Lisa Laidacker, computer teacher.

A group of teachers and staff at Central saw a need for improvement to their behavior program Busy Bees. With the development of the new strategic plan, it was the perfect opportunity to move forward to make teaching good behavior as important as academics.

"We can no longer assume every student knows appropriate behavior," said Lisa Fisher, life skills teacher. "We need to teach them what we expect of them."

South Williamsport Area School District superintendent Dr. Mark Stamm agreed that presuming each student understands how to behave in a classroom and on the bus is not the most efficient method.

"We don't expect students have an understanding of academics on their first day of school," Stamm said. "We need to stop assuming that about behavior as well. We need to be as committed to purposefully teaching children how to regulate their own behaviors, just as are committed to reading, writing and math."

Starting with school and community pride, the PBIS core team created SOUTH for the five areas of behavior expectations. The acronym stands for: Stay safe, Obey rules, Use kindness, Take responsibility and Help others.

These expectations will be taught and modeled in classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, bathrooms, the playground and on the bus. It is a total school commitment focused on helping children grow into good citizens.

By reinforcing good behavior through an incentive program, students are encouraged to make good choices, Stamm said. Part of that process is through uniform visuals and language school-wide.

Two visuals that will show how a student is behaving are a classroom clip chart and an individual ticket punch card.

The clip chart will display how a class is doing from the beginning to end of each day. Everyone starts in the middle at “Ready to Learn,” from there students can go up to “Good Job,” “Awesome” and “Outstanding” or down to “Slow Down,” “Think About It” and “Parent Contact.”

When a student demonstrates self-control and acts responsibly, they can move up the chart. If they make poor choices, they will move down the chart.

Alongside this, each individual will have a punch card to track their own progress. When they move up the clip chart, they receive a hole punch on the ticket. If they misbehave, they will receive a warning, have a reteaching moment or have their parent called.

To reward students for behaving well in the cafeteria or while walking down the hallway, staff can give them a written shout-out which the child will take back to their teacher and receive another punch on their card.

When a student fills up their ticket with hole punches their name will be displayed on the Principal’s 100 Club chart where they will be acknowledged by the whole school, Stamm said. They will also be entered into a drawing for a prize and write their name in the brag book which is read over the loudspeaker at the end of the day.

There will also be a similar system on school buses. If students behave while on the bus, the entire group of riders will be rewarded.

Implementing a clear-cut system to teach behavior to young children has the potential to energize the students, teachers and staff at Central Elementary.

Everyone will participate together to work through the first year of PBIS and build a budget for fun incentives the kids could enjoy and find meaningful, said Fisher.

“I want the students to do well with PBIS,” she said. “I hope the incentives for positive behavior can minimize the negative behavior.”

All of the visual materials were paid for through a \$10,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN). Fisher’s grant writing prowess paid off and her application received the top score in the state.

“The quality of this program is due to funds provided by this grant and the countless hours of the entire PBIS core team,” Stamm said.