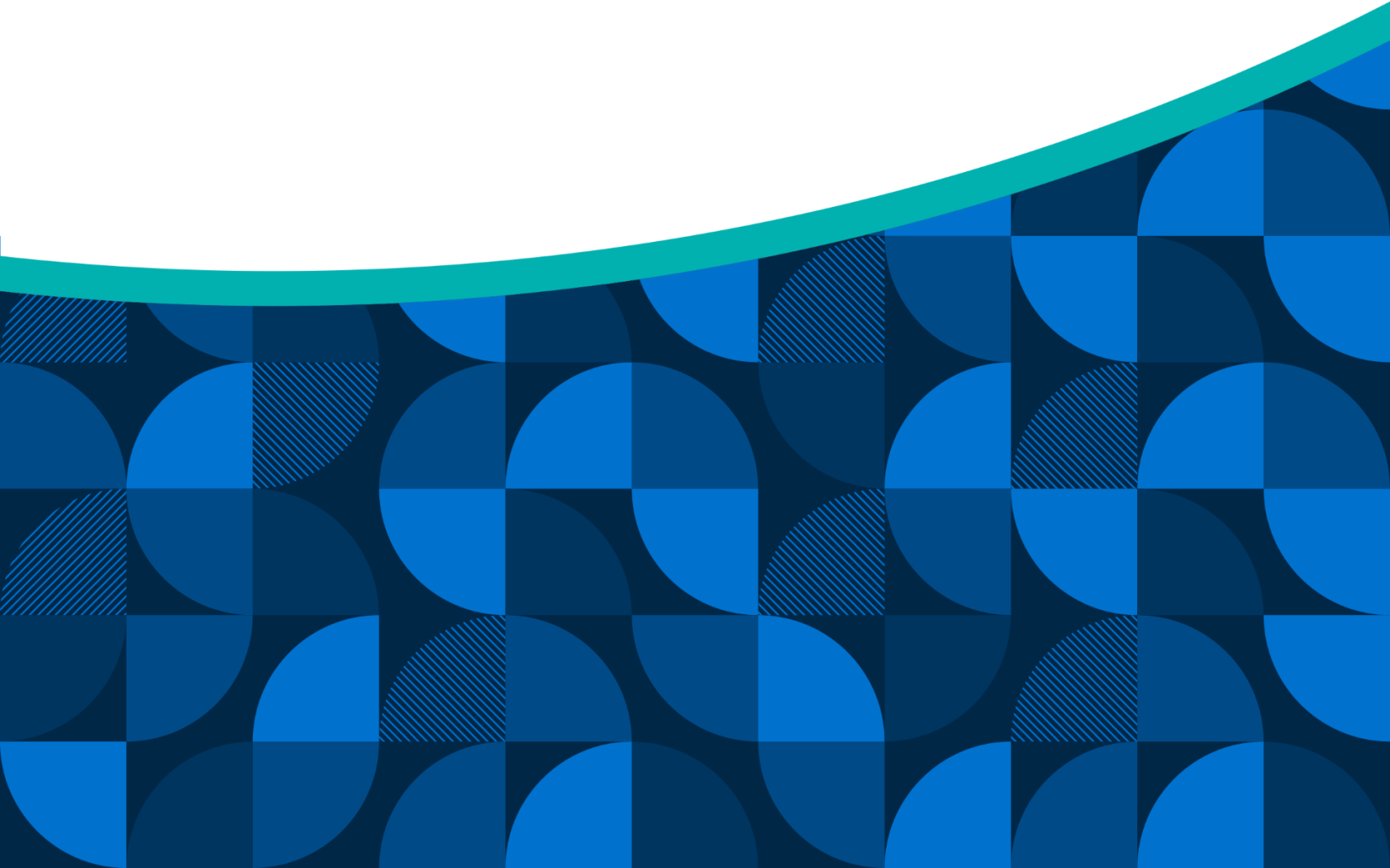




Improving Classroom Engagement

Engaged Resource Toolkit



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Table of Contents

Setting Classroom Behavior Expectations	4
Encouraging Student Voice in the Classroom.. . . .	8
Creating Multi-Modal Learning Opportunities.	13
Recognizing Positive Classroom Behavior.	18

Tools in This Resource Address the Following Diagnostic Activities:

- Teachers and/or staff at my school consistently and clearly state classroom rules/expectations that students across grade levels/classrooms can articulate and implement.
- Teachers and/or staff at my school offer opportunities for students to provide input on classroom rules and expectations.
- Teachers and/or staff at my school provide opportunities for students to regularly ask questions and share opinions during academic lessons
- Teachers and/or staff at my school offer regular (i.e., weekly) multi-sensory, multi-modal, or hands-on components to academic lessons (e.g., incorporate smell and sound, lab experiments, including both auditory and visual elements).
- Teachers and/or staff at my school provide students with incentives for positive behavior (e.g., recognition/praise, token system).



Setting Classroom Behavior Expectations

Use this section to help set, communicate classroom behavioral expectations with students.

GUIDE

Setting Classroom Expectations Promote Accountability

Use these steps with your teachers to help them create and understand the importance of setting clear classroom expectations that help improve student behavior and classroom culture.

Benefits of Setting Clear Classroom Expectations



Enhance Understanding of Acceptable Behaviors

Expectations help students maintain a routine, which allows them to buy into classroom culture and norms. Therefore, teachers can correct problem behaviors and keep problem behaviors small to minimize the impact felt on the wider classroom.



Improves Academic Rigor and Engagement

Expectations telegraph to students what their teacher believes they can accomplish. Research shows that teachers who set clear expectations of their students are more likely to have learning gains when challenge their students academically.



Reduces Potential Classroom Flashpoints

If or when conflict arises with or between students, clear expectations help teachers reference back to agreed upon rules to minimize harm on the classroom culture and hold students accountable.

Key Ingredients for Setting Behavior Expectations

- 1 Define Behavior Expectations, Rewards, and Consequences**

With your students, identify desired classroom behaviors to set classroom expectations. Each desired behavior should be observable, measurable, objective, and specific. Next, decide on classroom rewards and consequences (that align with school/district policy) with student input.
- 2 Communicate Behavior Expectations to Students and Families**

Place the behavior expectations in writing. Consider using a hard copy, emails, or communication tools (i.e., Parent Square) to let families know about classroom expectations. In the classroom, place expectations on classroom walls or bulletin board as a reminder to students.
- 3 Track Student Behavior Data Regularly**

Monitor student behavior at least weekly by logging teacher observations or tracking goal-based incentives and rewards. Consider using student information systems, like PowerSchool, so all behavior management notes are accessible in one place and to other school staff members.
- 4 Review Expectations Throughout the Year**

Using your behavior tracking, reapproach behavior expectations with your students if there has been shifts in classroom culture or behavior. Students are more likely to be invested in improving classroom culture when they know their input is considered in all decisions.

Source: Cornell University Center for Teaching Innovation, "[Setting Expectations: Building Inclusive Classrooms](#)," 2024; Ferlazzo, "[Teacher Expectations Play a Big Role in the Classroom. Here's How](#)," 2022; PowerSchool, "[How to Set Classroom Expectations to Improve Student Behavior](#)," 2023;

Creating Student-Led Expectations Activity

Provide teachers with these steps to help them create collaborative, student-led classroom expectations.

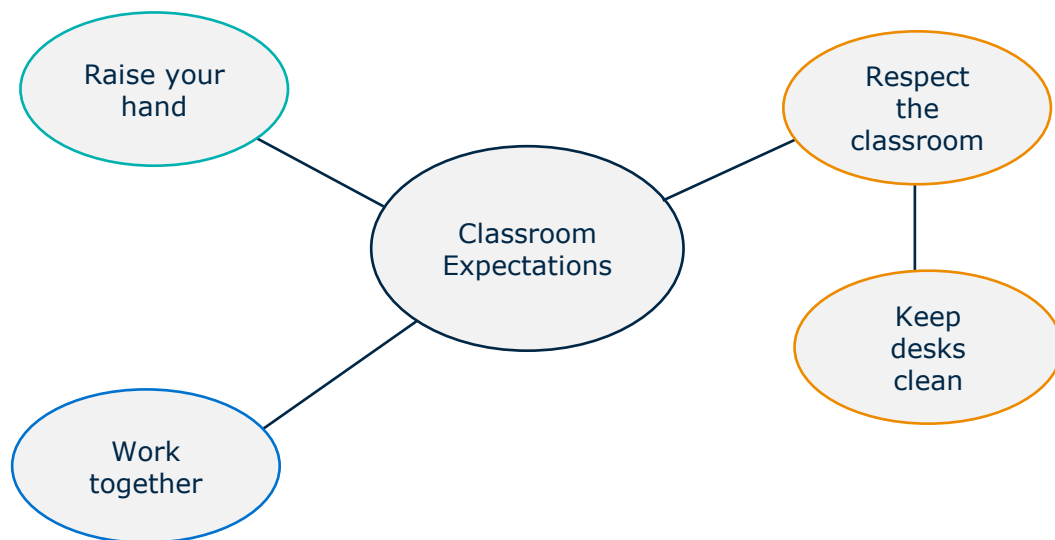
1 Host a Group Discussion

Start with a basic classroom discussion with prompts about rules you have had in the past to collect additional suggestions. Consider questions like:

- *Why is it important to be respectful in class?*
- *What are some positive ways to work with each other?*

2 Have Students Create Classroom Behavior Web Charts

Place students into small groups and have them write down their ideas for 5-10 minutes following your group discussion. Have students share their webs with the class



3 Identify Expectation Themes

Have students identify themes from small group web charts. Consider using a sticky note activity where students can write themes down and place them on the board to collect and visualize all students' thoughts.

4 Finalize Expectations

Teacher creates a finalized list of expectations based on students' input. If teacher wishes to include additional expectations, ensure suggestion is discussed with students before finalizing the list.

5 Visualize Expectations in Classroom

Teachers should place finalized expectations in a shared space that is visual to all students to further reiterate the importance of the agreed upon classroom expectations.

Source: Harmon, "Create Your Classroom Rule WITH Your Students for a Powerful Start to the Year." 2017

Classroom Behavior Contracts

Staff can use this template with students to formalize the established behavior expectations, communicate these to families, and hold students accountable.



Behavior Contract Template

Student: [Student's Name]
Grade/Class: [Grade/Class]
Teacher: [Teacher's Name]
Parent/Guardian: [Parent/Guardian's Name]

As a member of [Teacher's Name]'s classroom, I, [Student's Name], along with my parent/guardian, [Parent/Guardian's Name], hereby agree to uphold the following behavior expectations to create a positive and conducive learning environment:

- *[Outline agreed upon classroom expectations set by teachers and students]*

Response for Violating the Contract:

[Outline Classroom or Schoolwide Response/Outcome to Problem Behavior(s)]

I, [Student's Name], agree to abide by the terms of this Classroom Behavior Expectations Contract. I understand that failure to do so may result in an outcome as outlined above.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

I, [Parent/Guardian's Name], support my child in adhering to the terms of this Classroom Behavior Expectations Contract and agree to communicate and collaborate with the teacher to ensure their success.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

[Teacher's Signature] Date: _____

[School Administrator's Signature] Date: _____

This contract is valid for the duration of the academic year [Year], unless otherwise amended or revoked by the teacher or school administration.



Sign Contracts at Start of Year

Ensure contracts are set no later than ~1 month into the school year. Setting expectation early helps students learn how to model expected behaviors.



Reference Contract During the Year

When problem behaviors arise, pull students' behavior contract to help facilitate conversations, reminding students of the expectations they agreed on.



Encouraging Student Voice in the Classroom

Use this section to learn how to facilitate helpful conversations that encourage student input into the classroom.

GUIDE

Psychological Safety Sets Foundation for Engagement

Psychological safety refers to the emotional and mental well-being of students within an educational environment. Students must feel able to take interpersonal risks (e.g., expressing differing opinions, giving feedback, etc.) and be provided consistent and predictable routines to feel psychologically safe at school.



Did you know? Studies have shown that when students feel psychologically safe, their threat systems in the brain are regulated—allowing them to behave positively and stay engaged in learning.

Three Steps to Creating a Psychologically Safe Learning Environment

Dr. Amy Edmondson, professor of leadership and management at Harvard Business School, identified three key steps to creating psychological safety:



1. Acknowledge personal mistakes to set the example

By openly acknowledging their own mistakes and demonstrating a growth mindset (a belief that ability is developed over time), teachers create an environment that values learning, effort, and personal development. This can contribute to increased student engagement, confidence, and a positive attitude toward learning from mistakes.



2. Invite input by regularly collecting feedback from students

Inviting input and providing students with opportunities to ask questions and share opinions creates a collaborative classroom environment that promotes mutual respect and continuous growth for both teachers and students. By collecting regular feedback teachers demonstrate that they value the opinions, experiences, and perspectives of their students.



3. Work alongside students to show respect and earn their trust

When working with students, teachers should model the kind of behavior they want them to demonstrate in their interactions with one another. For example, instead of positioning themselves at the front of the room and talking at students for majority of lessons, teachers should consider incorporating open class discussions which foster mutual respect and active listening.

Promoting Student Voice in the Classroom

Use this page to learn more about the different ways your school can further promote student voice in the classroom and the impact it has on students.

Types of Student Voice in the Classroom

Type of Voice	Description	Student Role or Example
Formal	Applies to established systems, leadership, and/or governing processes	Participate in student committees, write letters to legislators, or lead student organizations.
Informal	Teachers invite student ideas and opinions regularly, with less obligation to act on the student ideas	Participate in school surveys; share opinions about current events.

Can Be Either Formal or Informal

Type of Voice	Description	Student Role or Example
Instructional	Applies to class environment, instructional materials, research topics, or assignment criteria.	Choose the format to complete an assignment (i.e. video or essay); lead your IDEP meeting; or determine a class project of interest in the community.
Cultural	The perspectives represented through class materials (texts, web-based, speakers) and opinions reflect the diversity of the study body and our global society.	Choose work (presentations, texts, books, music, etc.) created by individuals who reflect their sense of self and community.
Evaluative	Student give feedback that is used to effect changes in future decisions related to school.	Complete perception surveys about the instructional setting and teacher effectiveness to impact school decisions



Increases Students' Effort and Persistence

Students who have a voice in school are 7 times more likely to be academically motivated than students who do not believe they have a voice.



Improves Students' Feelings of Self-Worth

According to a 239 school, 14 state study, student voice leads to an increased likelihood of feelings of self worth and personal purpose in school.

Source: John & Briel, "Student Voice: A growing Movement within Education that Benefits Students and Teachers", 2017

Constructive Conversation Facilitation Guide

Encouraging students to openly share their thoughts and opinions fosters a psychologically safe learning environment by validating their perspectives and reducing the fear of judgment.

Principals: Offer professional development opportunities for teachers on effective communication and active listening skills. Equip them with the tools to engage in constructive dialogues with students, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected. Then, share this guide with teachers to help them facilitate open and fruitful conversations with your students.

Three Roles of Teacher Discussion Leaders

1 Establish Ground Rules

- ▶ The first step in facilitating an open and constructive classroom conversation is to **set clear and respectful communication guidelines**. Emphasize the importance of active listening and valuing diverse opinions to help students feel comfortable participating from the start.

- See [this example](#) of elementary teacher created rules for classroom discussions and adapt the language as needed to be age appropriate for your students.

2 Create an Inclusive and Respectful Environment

- ▶ Foster a culture of respect where every student's voice is valued by encouraging students to address each other by name, actively listen without interrupting, and respond thoughtfully. As the facilitator, make sure you provide sufficient time and space for participants to gather their thoughts and contribute to discussions.

- Print figure 4.13 out from [this blog](#) and put it on the wall in your classroom to remind students of all ages to ask respectful questions that can foster constructive conversation.

3 Encourage Participation and Build Confidence Through Diverse Questions

- ▶ Begin the conversation with questions that have no right or wrong answers to lower the perceived risk of participation and help build confidence. Then, incorporate a mix of open-ended questions, hypothetical scenarios, real-world examples, and opinion-based questions to cater to different learning styles and encourage varied responses.

- Review the *"Community Circles Question Guide"* on **page 8** for examples of low-risk, medium-risk, and high-risk questions designed to increase emotional awareness and build connections among students and their peers and teacher.

Community Circles Question Guide

Community circles provide a way for educators to build trust, develop relationships, and encourage open communication with their students. These 'circles' promote connection and inclusivity and can give students a starting point of voicing their opinions and curiosities.

Review the increasingly personal, thought-provoking, and perhaps 'risky' questions below. Start with the low-risk ones to build a solid foundation for trust and community. As your group becomes more comfortable, you can use the final questions to dig deeper, build more psychological safety in classrooms, and help students develop and share their own voice.

Getting Acquainted



- If you could be any animal, what would you be?
- What's your favorite subject in school?
- What do you like to do when you're not at school?
- What's your favorite season?
- What's your favorite movie?

Scratching the Surface



- How would your best friend describe you?
- If you had three wishes, what would you wish for?
- What is your greatest hope for the future?
- What's the best advice you've ever gotten?
- What qualities do you look for in a good friend?

Digging Deeper



- What is one thing you'd like to change about the world?
- What are you most passionate about?
- What impact do you want to leave on the world?
- Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
- If you could have a conversation with anyone in the world, living or dead, who would you choose?



Creating Multi-Modal Learning Opportunities

Use this section to help communicate the importance of multi-modal learning to teachers and identify ways teachers can enhance these opportunities in their classrooms.

Multimodal Learning 101

Use this page to communicate with teachers the importance of multimodal approaches and adapting lessons to meet all students' individual needs.



- ▶ Multimodal learning means using and combining several instructional methods/modes when educating students.
- ▶ Modes refer to the channels of information or content that communicate meaning or information.
- ▶ Incorporating various modes of sharing information gives learners exposure to information and learning in a variety of ways, creating a more opportunities to learn and engage in learning effectively

Use Various Modes to Reinforce Student Understanding

Incorporate these 4 common delivery modes into teaching to help engage all students and better meet their individual learning needs



Visual

Mode of presenting information with maps, charts, and other symbols that represent what could be said in words.



Auditory

Mode of presenting information that is "heard or spoken", such as, audiobooks or group discussion.



Reading/Writing

Mode of presenting information displayed as words with an emphasis on text-based inputs and outputs.



Kinesthetic

Mode of presenting information through experiences, such as case studies, field trips, or experiments.

Multimodal Learning Improves Student Engagement

- ▶ When students meaningfully interact with content, their peers, and their educators in varied modes of delivery they are known to be more motivated to meet learning objectives and goals.
- ▶ Nearly 50% of students are unsure of their learning styles or require different approaches based on subject area. Therefore, teachers should incorporate various approaches to make sure all students are engaging with lessons in several different ways.

Source: Karnasuta, "Multi-Modality Learning: Overview and Its Effects on Learner Engagement in the Twenty-First Century," 2017; Victoria Department of Education, "Creating Multimodal Texts," 2024; VARK Learn, "VARK Modalities"

Guidelines to Creating a Multimodal Classroom

Multimodal learning environments support differentiated instruction and considering all learning needs to help students succeed. Encourage teachers to use these guidelines when lesson planning to help improve academic engagement.



Incorporate Multimodal Texts in Content

Classroom videos, are often a reliable addition to many lessons. However, visual media is not the only mode that reinforces content. Ensure you are showing videos that incorporate closed captions, images, narrations, and music to further strengthen content and meet all students' needs.

► *Reflection Questions for Lesson Planning:*

- Does the platform I source videos from offer closed captioning accessibility?
- Does the narration of this video align with how I taught this content area/teaching style?
- Are there sufficient visuals (i.e., charts and images) used throughout the video that advance learning?



Reduce Cognitive Overload

Carefully organize the use of different modes and media to avoid overwhelming students with too much at once. Provide clear instructions and guidelines for lessons, including how students should engage with content.

► *Reflection Questions for Lesson Planning:*

- Are all modes used in this lesson intentional and related to content?
- Do my assignment guidelines provide students with page length, image limits, and/or slide recommendations and requirements?
- Does this lesson incorporate discussion and or "brain break" time during content delivery?



Provide Multimodal Feedback

If teaching and assignments are multimodal, feedback should be too. For example, only giving students traditional number grades and report cards without verbal feedback may not have as strong an impact as combining these approaches.

► *Reflection Questions for Lesson Planning:*

- Does this assignment welcome opportunities for me to give more detailed feedback on students' academic progress?
- Have I built in time to discuss class progress on this content?
- Do I encourage students to ask questions related to the feedback I provide them?

Multi-Modal Lesson Plan Checklist

Provide teachers with this checklist to help them incorporate multimodal learning into lesson plans



Multi-Modal Lesson Plan Checklist

Lesson Title:

Date:

Lesson Objective: *[state the objective of the lesson]*

Alignment with Learning Objectives

- Are the selected modalities directly aligned with the lesson's learning objectives and intended outcomes?
- Do the modalities support the students' ability to achieve the stated learning goals?

Multimodal Components

- Does the lesson plan incorporate multiple modes of representation, expression, and engagement?
- Are there opportunities for students to engage with the content through various senses and modalities?

Technological Integration

- If technology is used, is it integrated in a meaningful and purposeful way to enhance the multimodal learning experience?
- Are the technological tools and resources accessible and user-friendly for both the teacher and the students?

Accessibility and Inclusivity

- Does the lesson plan consider the diverse needs and abilities of all students, including those with special needs or learning differences?
- Are the technological tools and resources accessible and user-friendly for both the

Engagement Interaction

- Does the lesson plan allow for differentiation, enabling students to engage with the content in ways that best suit their individual learning needs?
- Are there opportunities for students to choose or customize the modalities they use to learn and demonstrate their understanding?
- Does the lesson plan include opportunities for student to demonstrate their understanding and receive feedback through multiple modes?
- Are the assessment methods aligned with the multimodal instructional strategies used in the lesson?

Scoring and Reflection:

After reviewing the lesson plan using the criteria above, consider the following:

- Identify the strengths and areas for improvement in the lesson plan's multimodal approach
- Reflect on how the lesson plan can be further improved to better incorporate multimodal instructional strategies.

Multimodal Teaching Strategy Examples

Multimodal learning can be achieved in many ways and may differ across grade levels. Use the below examples as a starting point for multimodal strategies teachers can incorporate in the classroom.

Sample Strategies

Recommended Grade Level(s)	Strategy	Description
6-12	<u>Case-Based Learning</u>	Teachers present information through real-life examples to allow students to apply content in the real world.
K-12	<u>Gamified Assessments</u>	Teachers create assignments that have a mix of question types to accommodate different learners. For example, tests can include a combination of open ended, sort the steps of a process in the right order, and match the image questions.
K-12	<u>Think-pair-share</u>	Teachers encourage students to take time to think about content individually. Next, pair up with classmates to compare their thoughts and ideas. Then, students can present their thoughts to the rest of the class
6-12	<u>Act-it Out</u>	Teachers allow students to act out the lesson with movement. For example, students help demonstrate a science experiment or act out the scenes in a reading lesson.
K-12	<u>Multimedia Content</u>	Teachers present information using graphics, written texts, subtitles, and sound. For example, videos demonstrating, visualizing, and talking through math problems and solutions is a multimedia approach.
K-8	<u>Print-Based Text</u>	Teachers assign tasks allowing illustrations of content. For example, students can engage with this strategy through creating picture storybooks, graphic novels, and comics.
6-12	<u>Digital Texts</u>	Teachers assign tasks requiring presentations, animation, social media use, or filmmaking. Digital technology requirements may vary, but teachers can accommodate based students' different skill levels and experiences.

Source: ; Victoria Department of Education, "Creating Multimodal Texts," 2024; VARK Learn, "VARK Modalities



Recognizing Positive Classroom Behavior

Use this section to help remind and support teachers in effective feedback practices.



Five Ways to Support Effective Feedback Practices

Use these practices to help improve your schools approaches to delivering positive behavior feedback, reinforcement, and praise.

1 Model Effective Recognition



Administrators can help set the tone on feedback practices in their school. Consistent recognition from school admin helps motivate teachers and models feedback they should give their students. [Check out EAB's Recognition and Value compendium](#) in the Teacher Morale Resource center for help.

2 Offer Feedback Training



Improve your professional development offerings by implementing feedback training. Ensuring all teachers know how and when to give feedback on students can help guarantee regular feedback is provided. Use the information in the following pages to design this training.

3 Provide Feedback Templates



A barrier to good feedback is the challenge of knowing how to best communicate with students and parent. Templates can help teachers become more efficient and direct in delivering feedback to their students and families.

4 Use Existing Communication Sources



Most school already have informal ways to communicate with school stakeholders. Quick informal feedback can be shared through communication platforms, such as ClassDojo or Parent Square.

5 Include Behavior Feedback on Report Cards



Similarly, if formal feedback is going home, consider adding behavior progress to those documents. Build a section in formal report cards, SIS, or LMS for teachers and staff to report on students' behavior. See the Safe toolkit for an example.

Effective Recognition Is Timely and Specific

Research shows that behavior-specific praise is one of the most common social reinforcers. Phrases like “very nice” may make the student feel great, but do not define *why* the behavior was good. Teachers must name the behaviors students are doing well and identify how they align with expectations, so students know exactly which behaviors to mirror or repeat in the future. For recognition to be effective, it must be clearly linked to specific actions delivered by someone of importance (i.e., teacher or staff member) to the student in a timely manner.

Two Key Factors



Timely

Students need recognition consistently and as close to the recognized behavior as possible. By elevating recognition in a timely manner, the action itself and its positive impact are still fresh in the mind. Due to human neurochemistry, timely praise helps tie the positive feelings associated with the chemical response to receiving effective recognition to the event and the specific behavior you want to reinforce.

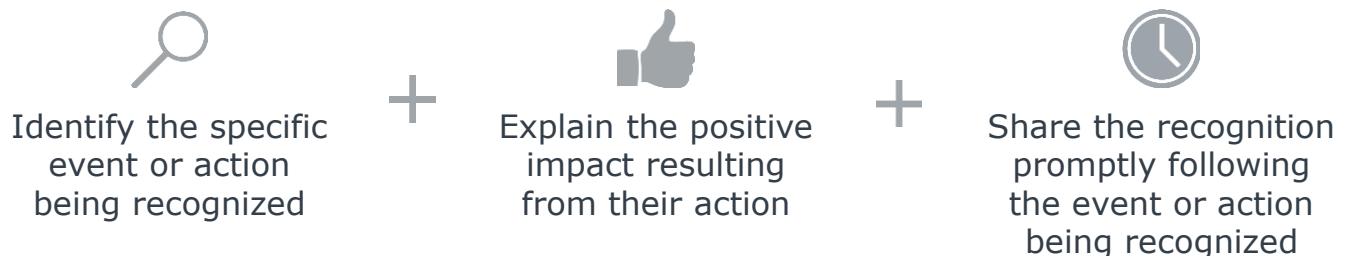


Specific

Too often, teachers rely on general appreciation efforts (e.g., extra recess time, class party, etc.) but what individuals value more is recognition of their specific behaviors. By elevating and recognizing specific behaviors that teachers and staff would like to continue, you both encourage others to pursue similar behaviors to receive recognition and more effectively make students feel valued.

Effective Recognition Formula

Use the below **three key variables** as a formula for leaders to use when recognizing teachers in any scenario:



1) Gallup, “In Praise of Praising Your Employees,” 2006.

Sources: Workhuman, [Employee Recognition: Basics, Best Practices, and ROI](#), 2021; Panorama Education, [Behavior-Specific Praise in the Classroom](#), 2022; Simonsen & Myers, [Class wide positive behavior interventions and supports](#), 2015 EAB interviews and analysis.

Planned Praise Template for Teachers

Use this template to help ensure consistent and equitable student recognition and incentives in your classroom that align with students' strengths.

Student Name	Unwanted Behavior	Strengths	Praise Statement	Incentive Received? (Y/N)
Mike	None	Transitions quickly in between lessons, specials, and recess	"Thank you, Mike, for showing us the way to stay on track with our work in between lessons!"	Yes
Michelle	Argues with adults about fairness often	Stands up for others in the class	Quiet praise (e.g., head nod or smile)	Yes

Positive Behavior Recognition Templates

To ensure feedback is timely and specific, use these templates to communicate with students and parents of the students' positive behavior. Adapt these templates for your teacher's preferred communication method including handwritten notes, emails, or through communication applications (i.e., ClassDojo or PowerSchool).

Exemplary Behavior

Dear Parent/Guardian(s),

I wanted to recognize [STUDENT NAME]'s incredible classroom behavior so far this (month/year/quarter). I had the pleasure of observing your child [INSERT SPECIFIC POSITIVE BEHAVIOR EXAMPLE] and wanted to take the time to recognize them for upholding our classroom and school expectations. It was great to have them model this great behavior for other students. Their actions truly exemplifies what it means to be a member of our school community. We look forward to their continued progress throughout the year!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Recent Behavior Improvement

Dear STUDENT,

I wanted to recognize you on your recent improvement in [INSERT SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR SKILL]. I know you've worked very hard over the past few months to achieve this goal and wanted you to know that your effort doesn't go unnoticed. In the classroom I watched you [INSERT SPECIFIC POSITIVE BEHAVIOR EXAMPLE]. This truly shows your commitment to our classroom expectations. We are proud to have you representing us in the classroom!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Positive Behavior Recognition Templates Cont.

To ensure feedback is timely and specific, use these templates to communicate with students and acknowledge positive behaviors. Adapt these templates for your teacher's preferred communication method including handwritten notes, emails, or through communication applications (i.e., ClassDojo or PowerSchool).

Exemplary Behavior

Dear [STUDENT],

I wanted to recognize you for your incredible classroom behavior so far this (month/year/quarter). I noticed recently that you [INSERT SPECIFIC POSITIVE BEHAVIOR EXAMPLE] and I wanted to take the time to recognize you for upholding our classroom and school expectations. It is great to see you lead by example for other student. You truly exemplifies what it means to be a member of our school community. Keep up the great work!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Outstanding Peer Mentorship

Dear [STUDENT]

I wanted to thank you for going above and beyond to mentor and support your peers! It has not gone unnoticed that you have been making an intentional effort to be inclusive and support them in our classroom. [INSERT SPECIFIC ANECDOTE ABOUT WHEN YOU NOTICED THEM PROVIDING MENTORSHIP AND HOW THAT WILL IMPACT THEIR PEER]. Mentorship and fostering relationships helps improve our school environment! Keep up the great work, we really appreciate it!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

How to Make Feedback More Actionable

Teachers spend hours providing thoughtful feedback but rarely see it result in meaningful progress. In fact, studies have shown that in more than 1 of 3 instances, feedback can hinder performance. This is because feedback can induce a lot of anxiety for students and trigger perceptions of threat and mistrust in their brains. As a result, students often dismiss feedback or shut down altogether.

EAB examined research from the fields of education, business, and neuroscience to understand what teachers can do to make their feedback more actionable. Below are four simple principles that teachers can apply right away to reduce perceptions of threat and increase the impact of their constructive feedback.



Limit Feedback to the 2-3 Most Critical Skills

Avoid overwhelming students with too many behaviors to correct at once

Teachers should not provide feedback on all content—only on what is impacting the student and their peers the most. Narrowing feedback helps students process it without overwhelming their cognitive loads, which allows students to home in on their most influential development areas and can save teachers a lot of time. To implement this principle, communicate the 2-3 critical skills that need improvement, and provide students concrete examples for how to improve upon those skills.



Allow Students Opportunities to Adjust Before Reapproaching

Avoid punitive responses for student trying to improve behavior

Separating feedback from discipline encourages students to thoughtfully review feedback and not dismiss it. This principle also holds students accountable to applying feedback and signals that learning is an ongoing process. First, communicate what behaviors need improving in the classroom and ask students what they think they can do to make the adjustment. Then, provide additional feedback over time on the student's progress.



Avoid "Sandwiching" Critical Comments Between Positive Ones

Ensure constructive feedback is well received by student(s)

Many teachers look for a way to soften constructive or critical feedback by "sandwiching" it within praise. But doing this can trigger students to prepare for critical statements every time they're told something positive. This can also lead to overpraising, which makes positive statements seem disingenuous, hindering student trust and engagement. It's best to deliver critical feedback on its own and in the context of goals. To soften a critical statement and still maintain a positive tone, try asking it as a question or pointing to a helpful resource instead.



Explicitly Connect Feedback to High Classroom Standards

Communicate why positive behavior is needed in the classroom

Each time you provide feedback, explicitly convey two sentiments: high expectations and confidence in students' potential. Specifically, include a note like this one: "I'm giving you this feedback because I have very high expectations, and I know that you can reach them." This assures students that the critical feedback is linked to the teacher's high standards (not bias) and a genuine belief that students can achieve those standards

Source: EAB, "How to Give Feedback to Get Results from Students"; Green, "Stop Using the Compliment Sandwich and Give Better Feedback"; 2014; Yeager, et. Al, "Breaking the Cycle of Mistrust," 2013



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