

Highlands Elementary School

A General Overview

Highlands Elementary School supports a school-wide program based on the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework.

School-wide PBIS is a research-based framework that has been proven to improve school climate, reduce problem behavior, and increase academic instructional time in schools (for additional information go to www.pbis.org). Two primary areas of emphasis in PBIS are positive intervention and instruction of social behavior. PBIS is based on the idea that when students are taught clearly defined behavioral expectations and provided with predictable responses to their behavior, both positive and corrective, all students are more likely to meet those expectations.

Highlands PBIS Team comprised of teachers, support staff and administration have developed school-wide procedures to accomplish the following:

- 1. Define Behavior Expectations.** A small number of clearly defined behavioral expectations are defined in positive, simple rules. These expectations are defined across school settings in the expectations matrix included in this handbook.
- 2. Teach Behavior Expectations.** The behavioral expectations and school procedures are taught to all students in the building and are taught in real contexts. Behavioral expectations are taught using the same teaching formats applied to academic instruction. When teaching, behavioral expectations they are grouped into 3 categories: Be Respectful, Be Safe, and Be Responsible. The rationale for the rules and behavioral expectations are presented for each setting. The staff will demonstrate examples of what the expected behavior looks like in the setting. Teachers will use common scenarios in the setting to demonstrate the expected behavior, but may also demonstrate 1 or 2 examples of the 'wrong way' to do it. It is also important for students to learn what is unacceptable behavior, but there should be more focus on the desired behavior. Next, students are given the opportunity to practice the "right way" until they demonstrate fluent performance.
- 3. Acknowledge Appropriate Behaviors.** Once appropriate behaviors have been defined and taught, they need to be acknowledged on a regular basis. Giving regular positive feedback when students use behaviors they have been taught is a critical step to teaching and maintaining desired behavior. Highlands Elementary School has developed an acknowledgment system to encourage regular recognition of desired behavior in the school. Positive or negative environments for students and staff are the result of the accumulation of individual positive or negative interactions. Research suggests that a 5:1 positive to negative ratio fosters the most positive and productive

school environments. Positive interactions can occur in many meaningful ways (pat on the back, smile, verbal praise), but the goal of an acknowledgment system is to provide a regular reminder to staff during your busy days to catch kids doing the right thing. Negative interactions are any time we give attention to students for problematic behavior (e.g. “Rex keep hands and feet to yourself.”, “Remember class, all eyes on the teacher.”, “Sophia that’s a beautiful drawing, but it’s time to start math.”) As a school we will strive to achieve and maintain a 5:1 ratio for all students.

Through our PBIS program, “Bear Badges” will be used by individual staff members and school volunteers to recognize students for engaging in positive behavior. Staff members can award “Bear Badges” to students across all school settings, whether they teach the student or not. When handing out “Bear Badges” we should always clearly identify the specific positive behavior the student is being recognized for and match it with one of the school behavior expectations: “Be Respectful, Be Safe, and Be Responsible. School-wide drawings will occur each week to recognize students for their positive behavior.

4. Responding to Problem Behavior. Despite our efforts to proactively set students up for behavioral success and to prevent problem behavior, there will still be incidents of problem behavior. When it comes to responding to problem behavior we have three primary goals:

- a) Make sure to keep everyone safe
- b) Minimize the loss of instructional time for all students (including the student who engaged in problem behavior)
- c) To teach the student the appropriate behavior to use instead of the problem behavior

Every occurrence of problem behavior is an important opportunity to teach the appropriate, desired behavior to the student. In developing our Highlands PBIS program it is our responsibility to provide fair and consistent consequences for problem behavior. The focus is to teach our students the appropriate behavior and re-engage them in academic instruction. The PBIS team has developed a progressive discipline model that focuses on teaching and preventing future occurrences of behavior. Instructions on using a “Major” Referral form are included in this Handbook. For students who engage in recurring problem behavior and who are not responding to the school’s progressive discipline system, additional individual behavioral supports will be provided.