City School District of Albany’s Response to Intervention Behavior and Academics Newsletter, publishing quarterly in September, December, March and June, shares resources and research-based best practices that can assist staff in increasing their skill set specific to both behavior management issues and academic instruction in an RtI model of service delivery.

Forward your article, resource reference or idea(s) to either Brianna Olsen (bolsen@albany.k12.ny.us) or Cathy Huttner (chuttner@albany.k12.ny.us)

Committee on Special Education
Remember, your CSE chairperson is part of your team and the decision-making process; they are a great resource for you! COMMUNICATE with your CSE Chairperson as you and your team make decisions regarding behavioral interventions for students who may at some point be either (1) seen for an initial CSE referral or (2) reviewed to discuss additional supports & services or a possible change in placement. COMMUNICATION & COLLABORATION among all stakeholders will lead to better outcomes for all students!

Preventative Strategies
In recognition of the new Code of Conduct requirement that all teachers document preventative strategies used to address challenging student behavior, the newsletter will throughout the school year highlight easy to implement and effective behavior strategies as a resource for teachers who may be looking for ideas and ways to expand their Tier 1 behavior management repertoires.

Looking for past issues of the newsletter?
PROXIMITY CONTROL refers to the teacher using their body to be close to students to decrease the probability of misbehaviors. Mobility is the process by which proximity is accomplished by the teacher. By moving around regularly and changing the zones of proximity, a teacher will be close to many students during a short period of time. This is an effective way to manage the classroom and to reduce off-task student behavior.

Jones (2007) describes three zones of proximity surrounding the teacher’s body in concentric circles. The colors red, yellow, and green are used to represent each zone. The red zone is where very few problems occur because the students are right in front of the teacher in a circular area that is about eight feet. The yellow zone is outside of the red zone; this can also be described as the caution zone. In the yellow zone, the students act like the students in the red zone as long as the teacher is facing them. The green zone; similarly to the green “go” on a stop light, is the zone in which students are more likely to engage in off-task behaviors as they are physically farther from the teacher and/or out of his/her view.

Effective teachers constantly use proximity to change zones and therefore disrupt the off-task behaviors or prevent off-task behaviors from starting. Jones (2007) provides three rules of movement:

1. Constantly change zones of proximity so that no student is in the green zone for long.
2. Stimulate the brain to attend by constantly changing everyone’s visual field.
3. Use movement as camouflage for dealing with off-task students.

When you are mobile, ideally two or three steps should be all it takes to switch a student from the green zone to the yellow zone or from the yellow zone to the red zone. The next logical step is to make mobility as easy as possible. Thus, the most important feature of room arrangement is not where the furniture goes, but, rather, where the furniture does not go. The objective of room arrangement is to create walkways. You want to be able to get from any student to any other student with the fewest steps possible. What is the shortest distance you can walk that will put you in proximity of every student in the class? In the diagrams below this is indicated by the red lines. This pattern of movement is called an interior loop. An interior loop puts you in proximity of every student with the fewest possible steps.

If you already have proximity without moving, you needn’t go any further. For example, primary teachers might have all the proximity they need sitting on the carpet reading to students at their feet. In closing, remember that both room arrangement and mobility are only means to an end. The objective of room arrangement is proximity.

Here’s a great idea from Arbor Hill Elementary School Special Educator, Gina Nichols, Social Worker, Trish Brady and Teacher Assistants, Kathy James & Kathy Banagan. Gina and her team use behavioral pre-correction as a routine strategy throughout the day in their special education classroom. Every instructional transition is preceded by both an oral and visual review of Tier 1 behavioral expectations, routines and procedures, specific to the new instructional demand and setting. Gina has created a set of charts that the team uses for this purpose. Gina says, “The charts itemize the protocols that are specific for each subject. Staff reviews the charts at the beginning of every subject change. In September, students wrote the protocols on a Graphic Organizer, along with the materials they need for each subject. They are taped in their notebooks for some of the subjects. At times, during instruction, an adult can just point to a protocol without directly restating the rule. At other times, we remind the kids of the protocol during instruction, when a protocol is not being followed.” Either way, the chart is kept in student view during the instructional period and used by teachers to prompt & provide redirection when needed. At the end of instruction the teachers can finish with a review of compliance to the expectations both as a means of providing immediate reinforcement and/or as a means to re-teach when and if needed. This low-tech strategy allows for ease of use and ease of individualization as construction paper and markers are all that are needed to update how you operationalize your procedures and instruction! This simple yet effective research-based* classroom management strategy is referred to as, “Post, Teach, Review, Monitor and Reinforce Expectations”.

Thanks, Gina and friends, for sharing!


---

**Special Education & Bullying: A Legislative Update**

Recent case law (2016) has emphasized the need to address bullying (when it is alleged) in a student’s IEP. A separate written Safety Plan allows for easier modification without the need to amend the IEP. IEP goals & modifications can be developed to address/reduce bullying. Consider a goal for teaching self-advocacy; when to report bullying, to whom & how to do so effectively.

Talk with your CSE Chairperson for further information!
**The Power of Positive Points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DON’T</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students DO earn points throughout the day. <strong>DO</strong> say: “Ahmed, you earned your point for safety by staying seated for math”</td>
<td>Students <strong>DO NOT</strong> have points taken away <strong>DO NOT</strong> say: “Ahmed, I’m going to take away your point”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point sheets DO identify students who need additional support</td>
<td>Point sheets <strong>DO NOT</strong> punish students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DO</strong> encourage students throughout the day to follow the school-wide expectations</td>
<td><strong>DO NOT</strong> threaten students that they are going to lose their points if….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a student fails to follow an expectation, <strong>DO</strong> reteach the positive behavioral expectation.</td>
<td>When a student fails to follow an expectation, <strong>DO NOT</strong> focus on the lack of earning the point or the loss of the point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points are used to document behaviors. Discussion with students should be private.</td>
<td>Student’s points should not be discussed with the whole class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff <strong>DO</strong> document points on DOJO at the end of each interval (for buildings using Class Dojo as their means of tracking points data)</td>
<td>If using DOJO, <strong>DO NOT</strong> display points for all to see; alert notification (sound) needs to be turned off.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Students with ADHD?**

A recent study published in the *Journal of Child Neuropsychology*, found that children with ADHD perform better on a complex attention task when they are fidgeting. How might this inform your management of students with ADHD? Here is a link to an article by the authors of the study:

[http://www.chadd.org/AttentionPDFs/ATTN_02_16_DontStopTheMovement.pdf](http://www.chadd.org/AttentionPDFs/ATTN_02_16_DontStopTheMovement.pdf)