

MAKE YOUR DAY

A SCHOOL-WIDE CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS
TEACHERS TO TEACH AND ALLOWS STUDENTS TO LEARN



Earl's Corner

The Impact of Language on Student Buy-In

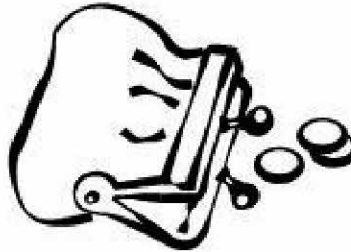
A few years ago, Ford Middle School in Tacoma, Washington, which has used MYD since the 1998-99 school year made a change in their script for Points and saw a significant reduction in discipline referrals. Students now state the number of points earned and then say, "I earned my points by... and I take responsibility for..."

Every year, whether we're working with a new school or a continuing school, we emphasize the importance of language when implementing MYD. Language that emphasizes student choice and responsibility supports the underlying philosophy of MYD promoting both student and parent buy-in. The following are a few examples that should be incorporated into everyday practice:

- Instead of the school rule, it's our rule and each student's rule - shared not imposed.
- A mistake is an opportunity to learn and everyone, including the teacher, will be demonstrating mistakes throughout the day.
- Steps can be described as a "take" followed by "mis-take" followed by "studying one's lines" followed by a "retake."
- You have permission to go to Step ___ for (state reason).
- Open each period or activity with "If you would like to earn Points this period, the expectations are..."
- Close each period with "The expectations were... Think about how your earned Points. Reflect on your effort. Did you do your personal best?"

- Points are always earned or not earned.
- Speaking respectfully to students in all situations will provide a model for them about how to address others respectfully.

Like Ford Middle School, please share with us what works and what doesn't work so that we can all learn from each other. Have a good year. More later.

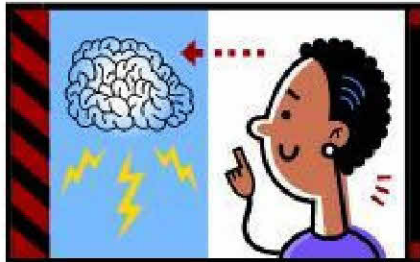


Cheryl's Two Cents - A Real-Life Example

"The school that they attended starts with 10, 13 or 40 points and then points are taken away. (I imagine the point system is teacher driven) More than one restroom visit results in loss of points in my oldest child's classroom. Some kids are wired differently than others and aren't intentionally trying to skip class, they have a physical need. (he gets embarrassed easily, again an age related emotion, so he now holds it all day)." (A quote from a parent email, used with permission)

This is an excerpt from a much longer communication in which a parent questioned how the creator of MYD would believe that he had developed a program that was positive for children. In reference to Points, she asked "How about you start with 0 and the children earn points for good behavior? Positive reinforcement."

This is one of many examples that we receive in reference to parent and/or student concerns about the implementation of MYD. We know that the majority of educators are using MYD in a positive and encouraging way, but when there are those who slip into framing MYD negatively it affects everyone. Just as we ask students to share Concerns in reference to interfering behaviors, we would encourage you to help each other maintain MYD in a way that creates a positive learning environment. Encourage your students to help also by sharing Concerns with you. And, encourage your parents to contact you if they have questions. Creating a physically and emotionally safe learning environment is a responsibility shared by all members of the school community.



Brainstorm: Sharing Ideas

A variation on the script for Concerns submitted by Mike Franza, former administrator.

I always asked my teachers during Concerns to have students share Concerns (and) ending with the following statement. "Would you reconsider your points?"

One of the most important things in MYD is the locus of control. Kids need to feel being empowered. (their own control not control of others)



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