

Classroom Acknowledgements & Celebrations

A digital one-pager



Virginia Department of Education's
Training & Technical
Assistance Center
at Old Dominion University

Purpose:

Similar to Schoolwide Celebrations, Classroom Celebrations are meant to build and strengthen a classroom environment where a sense of community is created where all students are appreciated and add value to the team. Benefits of a celebratory classroom include:

- ✓ Engagement in meeting classroom goals
- ✓ Increased sense of belonging
- ✓ Increased student motivation
- ✓ Celebration of learning
- ✓ Stronger teacher-student relationships

Why have Classroom Celebrations?

Classroom celebrations may be planned to acknowledge collective goals that all students have the opportunity to help reach. Set clear, measurable goals, such as:

- ✦ At least 80% of all blocks/classes earn at least one positive referral
- ✦ All students attain one of their academic growth goals
- ✦ At least 80% of students acknowledge or shout-out each other using a class Hall of Hype
- ✦ Class earns 20 compliments (an adult in the building recognizes class as a whole)

Examples of Classroom Celebrations:

- Extra recess or activity
- Theme dress days to match a unit of study
- Music events, such as dances or karaoke
- Art or Creation Stations
- Escape Room Activity
- Storytime celebrations
- Community service opportunities
- 100th day of school / Pi Day

Why Non-Exclusionary Class Celebrations?

- ✗ Withholding participation due to behavior or academic performance can decrease motivation (Deci&Ryan, 2000)
- ✗ Excluded students may feel even further alienated by their classroom community

Considerations:

- Create Classroom Expectations **together**
- Build an Acknowledgement Matrix **with** students (they have great ideas, and often free!)
- **Practice** desired behaviors or skills frequently using Group Contingencies
- Recognize **effort and improvement**, in addition to excellence
- **Vary frequency** of acknowledgement – immediate, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly
- Consider opportunities for **intermittent recognition** to maintain enthusiasm, such as choosing a number leading up to achieving a class goal, and have a small celebration for (e.g. 10 minutes extra recess, no homework, etc.)
- **Maintain consistency** in using reinforcement once a goal has been set
- Celebrate sometimes **just for fun**, with no goal or achievement to be earned

Key Take-Aways:

A positive classroom climate is one in which EVERY student feels sense of belonging and is **motivated by a team atmosphere**, rather than punishment or blaming, **that celebrates success!**

- ✓ Set goals that all students can participate in reaching
- ✓ Focus on positive reinforcement *rather than punishment*
- ✓ Celebrate effort, improvement and build class spirit
- ✓ All means ALL – Every student is included!

For additional information:

Center on PBIS: pbis.org

Association for Positive Behavior Support: apbs.org

National Center on RtI: mtss4success.org

10 Powerful Community Building Ideas

Reference list

[linked here](#)