
IN LINE ON TIME—INCREASING STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Stonehurst Avenue Elementary School Sun Valley, California

In Line On Time involved the entire school community in encouraging students to be at school, every day, on time. Many students took the bus to school, and if they missed the bus, they stayed home. The Action Team for Partnerships wanted to provide an incentive to be at school everyday.

The new attendance program, In Line On Time, included the following steps: a two-minute bell rang letting students know it was time to line up in their class lines. Teachers waited at their class lines to count their students when the official school bell rang. If all students were present, the class earned a star on their attendance packet that was turned in to the office. Excused tardiness or absences were not taken into consideration. A star was also put up in the classroom so that students could keep track of how close they were to earning five stars. A total of five stars won the class a popcorn party, sponsored by the PTA, or extra time in the computer lab. Teachers made arrangements for the popcorn or computer lab rewards.

The Action Team sent a letter to the entire school community explaining the new practice, the district attendance policy, and the importance of children being in class every day, on time. The principal held an assembly at the beginning of the year to explain the new program. A simple sign reminding students of In Line On Time was

hung in each classroom. A bulletin board was put up in the school office.

Almost all classes earned five stars, and some classes earned five stars multiple times. Student attendance increased by 2%. Positive peer pressure helped students attend school on time. For example, as the first grade class was waiting in line, a student said, “We have 19. I sure hope Chris gets here. Oh look, there he is! Great, we get a star!” A parent said to a teacher, “My son just does not want to be late; he keeps telling me to hurry up. ‘I have to be at school on time; we want to get a star, and we only need two more.’” This practice fostered a positive atmosphere at school and rewarded students for being at school on time. In addition, teaching time increased because everyone was in line before the official bell rang.

For next school year, the Action Team will use a staff development day to improve the program. They will work on maintaining motivation to be In Line On Time throughout the year. When classes had not earned a star in a long time, it was easy to forget to encourage the students. Working together, every student can be In Line On Time, every day.

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