

Level System Basics

What are point and level systems?

- They are an organizational framework for managing student behavior where “students access greater independences and more privileges as they demonstrate increased behavior control.” (Heward, p. 241, 2009)
- Students earn specific rewards, privileges, and negative consequences that are linked to specific expectations in the classroom.
- There are very specific criteria for moving up and down the level system that is consistent for all students on the system.

The Four Main Goals of Point/Level Systems (Farrell, Smith, & Brownell, 1998)

- Increasing appropriate behavior
- Promote academic achievement
- Foster a student’s improvement through self-management
- Develop personal responsibilities for social, emotional, and academic performance.

How to Set Up a Level System

1. Set up classroom rules/expectations/responsibilities.
2. Set up the way students will move up and down the level system.
3. Set privileges, rewards, loss of privileges, etc. for each level of your system.
4. Set Exception/Automatic/Serious Misbehavior clauses to the way a student move up or down the level system.
5. Decide how to track or record your system.

1. Setting up classroom rules/expectations/responsibilities

- Rules should be positively stated (i.e. Raise hand and wait quietly until called on.).
- Number of rules kept to a minimum with the maximum being five.
- Rules need to be taught, modeled, and role played at the beginning of the school year and reviewed periodically throughout the year. It is wise to review them when coming back to school after any significant break (Winter Recess, Spring Break, etc.)

2. Set up the way the students will move up and down the level system.

- Ten miss behavior points moves you down a level. You move back up to the top level the next day at the same time you dropped.
- There is a total amount of points possible for the student each day. The points they end the previous day determine their level for the next day. (i.e. 100 points possible for the day and if you have 95-100 points you are on the top level will full privileges for tomorrow.)
- For younger populations you could use precision requests [Link] and if the student does not respond with appropriate behavior, they move down a level or section. All students start at the top of the level system at the beginning of each day.

3. Set privileges, rewards, consequences, etc. for each level of your system.

- Privileges must be rewarding to your current students. If they are not motivating to the student, they will not work for them. What motivates our students usually changes quickly and several times through the school year.
- They must be more reinforcing then misbehaving.
- Consider revisiting reinforcement on a least a monthly basis.
- Asking our students for ideas is a fabulous resource.

4. Set up exception/automatic/serious misbehavior clauses to the way a student move up and down the level system.

- These misbehaviors are rare, but their seriousness requires pre-planned consequences. Examples of these serious misbehaviors could include, but are not limited to any safe school violation, long-term tantrum, excessive swearing, carrying a weapon, blatant or defiant non-compliance, etc.
- You may have to re-define these behaviors as the population of your students change.

5. Decide how to track or record your system.

- You need to have your system visually represented in your classroom so students and staff members know the level of each student at all times. [link here to several visual examples from our classrooms]
- Use level sheets, point sheets, planners, etc. to record the details/incidents of the misbehavior that warranted the level system move for individual students. [link here to some visual examples – my level sheet, Emilee’s planner and example email.]

Cautions

Level systems work for the majority of our students, but not for all students. When we see a student consistently at the bottom of your level system, consider taking them off.

This would be a good time to move to a behavioral contract where a defined specific expected behavior with a specific reinforcement at a specific time with a specific person. [Might want to use more language similar to what Safety Care states.]