



## Policy 8510: Classroom Rewards

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activity affect the health and well-being of the Corporation's students. Furthermore, scientific research has linked school meals and healthy diets to academic success.

<b>Benefits of healthy, nutrient dense meals and snacks with academic performance:</b>	<b>Hindrance of treats and calorie dense meals and snacks with academic performance:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved cognitive performance (e.g. better ability to focus, comprehend, and retain information)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decreased cognitive performance (less alert, inability to focus, poor memory quality)</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased problem solving skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decreased processing of complex visual display and problem-solving skills</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduced absenteeism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Higher rates of absenteeism and tardiness</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Higher standardized test scores and grades</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower grades and repeating school years</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive behavior in the classroom</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Poor behavior and lack of concentration in the classroom</li></ul>

For these reasons, schools are strongly discouraged from rewarding children in the classroom with candy and other foods that can undermine children's diets and health and reinforce unhealthy eating habits. In addition, students with food allergies/intolerances or religious/lifestyle restrictions may feel ostracized if they cannot take part in celebrations involving food they cannot eat. A wide variety of alternative rewards can be used instead to provide positive reinforcement for children's behavior and academic performance.

### **Non-Food Reward Suggestions**

Non-material rewards involving recognition, privileges and opportunities for physical activity or other types of enrichment are powerful ways to help meet academic performance goals. Material rewards such as school supplies, trinkets, toys, and gift certificates can be donated by parents or provided by parent-teacher organizations for use on a more limited basis.

### **Non-Material Rewards**

- Verbally recognizing a student in the classroom
- Recognizing students during morning announcements or at a school assembly

- Student of the Week/Month photo recognition board
- Special recognition on school's website or social media page (if approved by guardian)
- Phone call or email to the students' parents
- Hand-written note commending achievement
- Certificate of recognition

### **Elementary Students**

- Make deliveries to office
- Teach class
- Be a student helper
- Read morning announcements
- Dance Party or other fun physical activity break
- Sit next to friends
- Eat lunch with the teacher
- Play a favorite game or do puzzles
- Fun movie
- Extra recess time
- Show and tell
- Free time at the end of class
- Listen to music or a book on audiotape
- Read outdoors or have class outside
- Extra art, music or reading time
- Earn points to spend on classroom privileges

### **Middle School**

- Sit with friends
- Choose partners for activities
- Listen to music while working at desk
- Reduced homework or "no-homework" pass
- Extra credit
- Fun movie
- Brainteaser puzzles, group activities, and games
- Computer time
- Free choice time or chat break at end of class
- Have class outside

### **High School**

- Extra credit

- Fun movie
- Reduced homework
- Late homework pass
- Listen to music/earbuds during independent work time
- Class outside
- Hall pass to leave class 5 minutes early
- Recognition on morning announcements
- Donated tickets to school events (e.g. dances, theater shows, sporting events, etc.)

### **Material Non-Food Rewards**

- Gift certificate to school store
- Certificate, trophy, ribbon, or plaque
- Earn points or play money to spend on prizes
- Stickers
- Pencils/Pens
- Erasers
- Bookmarks
- School Supplies
- Trinkets
- Special Art Supplies
- Games
- Puzzles
- Brain-teaser Book
- Toys
- Craft Kits
- Water bottles
- Books
- Journal/Diary
- Movie/Music gift cards
- School Branded Apparel
- Phone popsockets
- Raffle for bigger prizes, such as a bike or iPod

*This is a non-comprehensive list. Please check with building administrators to ensure they comply with school policies before implementing strategies.*