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Social Validity of Teacher-Written Praise Notes in a Title One Elementary School

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Educational Specialist

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ABSTRACT

Social Validity of Teacher-Written Praise Notes in a Title One Elementary School

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Praise notes have the potential to positively influence student behavior and relationships. Few studies have examined the social validity of praise, however, and these studies have focused on students' perceptions. The purpose of this study was to describe student, parent, and teacher perceptions of a school-wide praise note intervention at a Title I elementary school. Twenty-three teachers, 203 parents, and 203 students completed surveys regarding a pre-existing praise note intervention. Surveys consisted of 13 quantitative items and two open-ended questions. Quantitative and qualitative results indicate that participants had positive perceptions of praise notes. Participants also believed that praise notes helped improve relationships, home/school communication, and student behavior. Results also suggest that praise notes are sustainable and have a good level of buy-in. While parents liked praise notes and believed that praise notes improved home/school communication, teachers seemed unaware of parents' enthusiasm. Implications and limitations of this study are addressed.

Keywords: elementary school students, positive reinforcement, elementary school teachers, teacher attitudes, intervention

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of positive behavior support (PBS) is to improve the quality of life for students, parents, and teachers by making changes in behavior (Anderson & Freeman, 2000; Carr, Dunlap, Horner, Koegel, Turnbull, & Sailor, 2002; Sugai, Horner, Dunlap, Hieneman, Lewis, & Nelson, 1999). Two main influences have impacted PBS: behavioral methods and humanistic values (Carr et al., 2002). In relation to behavioral methods, PBS has strong ties to applied behavior analysis (ABA) and principles of reinforcement (Gresham, 2004). Humanistic values give PBS an emphasis on individualized attention and interventions of social significance (Carr et al., 2002).

Praise is an intervention consistent with the roots of PBS and its emphasis on positive reinforcement. Praise is a type of reinforcement when it increases the probability of a behavior (Brophy, 1981), and it is more likely to be reinforcing when it is contingent, frequent, specific, and appropriately delivered (Brophy, 1981; Marchant & Young, 2001). Effective praise has been associated with positive behavioral, academic, and social outcomes (Gable, Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009; Sutherland, Wehby, & Copeland, 2000). Other advantages of praise include time- and cost-effectiveness (Brophy, 1981; Sutherland et al., 2000).

Praise notes are written statements of praise that can be given to the recipient. In addition to having many of the advantages of verbal praise, written praise has the potential to reinforce the recipient multiple times with one administration and allows the praise to be shared with others. Though not researched as extensively as verbal praise, written praise has been associated with positive changes in students' behavior (Caldarella, Christensen, Young, & Densley, 2012; Nelson, Caldarella, Young, & Webb, 2008; Nelson, Young, Young, & Cox, 2009; Wheatley, West, Charlton, Sanders, Smith, & Taylor, 2009).

Interventions such as praise notes must have social validity, which includes the social acceptability and social importance of an intervention (Kazdin, 1977; Wolf, 1978).

Demonstrating intervention effectiveness is often not sufficient; researchers also need to demonstrate that the intervention and its effects are socially important (Gresham & Lopez, 2004; Kazdin, 1977). Assessing social validity and making subsequent adjustments can be an important part of program vitality (Schwartz & Baer, 1991).

Examining the social validity of praise notes can help determine if research on this topic should continue. Praise, and written praise in particular, has much potential as an intervention. The emerging research suggests that praise notes can have a positive impact on student behavior. Few studies have researched praise notes, however. If social validity assessment finds that stakeholders accept praise notes and view them as important, then written praise is a good place to focus research efforts.

While praise has been widely researched, few studies have examined the social validity of praise. No studies have described parent or teacher perceptions of praise. Only one study has included a social validity component for praise notes, but only students' perceptions were described (Nelson et al., 2008). Other studies have also explored students' perceptions of praise, but most have examined middle school students' perceptions rather than those of elementary school students (Burnett & Mandel, 2010; Elwell & Tiberio).

The purpose of this study was two-fold: (a) to examine social validity by describing, comparing, and contrasting teachers', parents', and students' perceptions of a school-wide praise note intervention; and (b) to determine ways in which the intervention could be improved. While praise notes continue to be validated by the research, they should also be validated by the stakeholders.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Schools must address a wide variety of student behavior problems (Walker et al., 1996). Traditionally, methods such as punishment have been used to control problem behavior in schools (Maag, 2001). Many schools *react* to student behavior problems as they arise, which can impede meaningful change (Walker et al., 1996). Because of this reactionary approach, many schools are not fulfilling the potential that they have to help students overcome behavioral challenges. However, certain methods can be used to help schools be *proactive* in dealing with problems, and positive behavior support (PBS) is one such program.

Positive Behavior Support (PBS)

Positive behavior support “refers to the application of positive behavior interventions and systems to achieve socially significant behavior change” (Sugai et al., 1999, p.6). Carr and colleagues (2002) divided the term into two parts. “Positive behavior” refers to the goal of PBS, which is to increase students’ success and satisfaction through improved behavior and social skills. “Support” refers to the methods used to accomplish help students, including educational methods, behavioral interventions, and environmental redesign. PBS emphasizes the use of empirically based interventions (Scott, 2007; Sugai et al., 1999). PBS also encourages schools to respond to problem behavior in ways other than punishment and enables schools to address individual and school-wide challenges on a systems level (Sugai et al., 1999; Walker et al., 1996).

In addition to eliminating problem behavior, PBS interventions can address problems with more acceptable behavior (Carr et al., 2002; Sugai et al., 1999). The overarching goal is to improve the quality of life for students and others (Anderson & Freeman, 2000; Carr et al., 2002; Sugai et al., 1999). Improving quality of life could involve helping students develop better

relationships, social skills, and educational opportunities (Anderson & Freeman, 2000). A secondary goal of PBS is to reduce or eliminate problem behaviors that may interfere with quality of life (Carr et al., 2002).

Roots of PBS. Two main foundations influence the goals and methods of positive behavior support. The first foundation is behavioral science, especially applied behavior analysis (ABA) (Carr et al., 2002; Sugai et al., 1999). Humanistic, person-centered values have also been influential (Anderson & Freeman, 2000; Carr et al., 2002; Sugai et al., 1999). PBS is an integration of these two foundations.

ABA, derived from Skinner's (1953) work, focuses on operant conditioning and the three-term contingency of antecedents, behaviors, and consequences (Gresham, 2004). ABA attempts to use behavioral principles to find practical solutions to problems of social significance (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1987). PBS owes much to ABA for its contributions of assessment and intervention strategies (Carr et al., 2002).

In addition to contributions from applied behavioral analysis, humanistic values have also influenced PBS. While humanistic values do not take precedence over empirically based practices and behavioristic approaches, these values can help determine methods, goals, and plans for PBS interventions (Carr et al., 2002). The primary goal of PBS, for example, is a humanistic one—to improve quality of life for students, parents, and teachers (Anderson & Freeman, 2000). Another humanistic value that guides PBS practice is the idea that interventions should be socially significant. In other words, behavior change should be durable, useful in many contexts, and increase opportunities for growth (Sugai et al., 1999). PBS interventions should also focus on the individuality of each person (Anderson & Freeman, 2000; Sugai et al., 1999).

Application of PBS. Proponents of PBS consider student needs on an individual basis (Anderson & Freeman, 2000). Schools cannot always help children in the same way, as each child faces different challenges (Gresham, 2004). Some children have externalizing behavior problems (e.g., aggressive and antisocial behavior) while others have internalizing problems (e.g., social withdrawal and depression; Sugai et al., 1991). To meet the needs of each student, a three-tiered approach is important in developing PBS intervention plans (Walker et al., 1996). Interventions from all tiers are included under school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS).

Sugai and colleagues (1999) described the three tiers in educational settings. The tertiary tier includes students with the most intense behavior problems and those who are in need of the most individualized interventions. This tier represents 1–7% of students enrolled in school. The secondary tier includes all students who are at-risk for such problems. Comprising of approximately 5–15% of the school, these students receive specialized group interventions. Most students, however, do not have serious problem behaviors. The primary tier includes 80–90% of the school, and specialized interventions are not needed at this level. Therefore, this tier has a focus on prevention and uses universal supports to accomplish this goal.

Anderson and Kincaid (2005) described universal interventions under the first tier, where the goal is to prevent problem behaviors rather than to react to current problems. School-wide interventions may accomplish this goal in ways such as establishing school-wide expectations, reinforcing those who show positive behaviors, and analyzing school data, such as office discipline referrals, to assess the current levels of behavior. Primary-tier interventions are universal and are thus delivered uniformly to all students (Gresham, 2004). When students do not respond to these interventions, they move to the secondary tier for more intense and individualized treatment (Walker et al., 1996).

Types of PBS interventions. Interventions for all three PBS tiers have several elements in common: environmental redesign, curriculum redesign, and modification of behavior (Sugai et al., 1999). In environmental redesign, the environment is changed in ways that will help students perform at an optimal level (Anderson & Freeman, 2000). Examples of environmental redesign include changes in policy, structure, and routines. In addition to environmental redesign, PBS can employ methods of curriculum redesign, namely the teaching of new skills, including social skills or academic skills. Modification of behavior can include changing the behavior of the student or those who interact with the student (e.g. teachers, administrators, parents). For example, teachers can modify their behavior by changing the rate at which they give praise. Interventions with children can include behavior modification, which can include functional behavior analysis.

Praise

Praise can be used as a PBS intervention. Definitions of praise vary widely, but most agree that praise is a way to express approval (Brophy, 1981; Chalk & Bizo, 2004; Madsen et al., 1968). In some cases, praise and approval are considered synonymous (Madsen et al., 1968). Some researchers explain that praise is more than acknowledgment of student achievement; it also expresses positive affect or places value on what the child achieved (Brophy 1981; Chalk & Bizo, 2004). Praise can be expressed in verbal or written formats (Gable et al., 2009).

Praise is also considered a form of reinforcement (Brophy, 1981). Positive reinforcement is anything that increases the frequency and probability of a behavior it follows (Brophy, 1981; Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Maag, 2001). Thus, praise is reinforcement only when it increases the frequency of a behavior. Praise has the potential to be a reinforcer, but this potential is not always realized. Brophy (1981) noted that many teachers use praise without the intent to

reinforce specific behaviors. For example, some teachers use praise as encouragement, peace offerings, consolation prizes, expressions of approval, or a balance to criticism. However, these uses are not reinforcement unless the frequency of a behavior increases. For praise interventions to be effective, they must reinforce behavior.

Effective praise. Praise is more likely to change student behavior when it has effective characteristics. Several of these characteristics have been identified, including praise that is contingent, frequent, and specific (Marchant & Young, 2001). Another characteristic to consider is the delivery of praise (Brophy, 1981; Madsen et al., 1968).

Effective praise is contingent and frequent. Brophy (1981) noted that praise must follow the targeted behavior, and only after the behavior occurs. This helps students know why they are being reinforced. In addition to being contingent, praise must be frequent. The strength of reinforcement is weakened when teachers do not give praise after the targeted behavior occurs. Studies have shown that teachers' rates of praise are usually lower than reprimands in response to students' social behavior (White, 1975; Merrett & Wheldall, 1992). With an emphasis on regular and contingent praise, student behavior can be improved (Ferguson & Houghton, 1992).

Another characteristic of effective praise is specificity. Specific praise is more effective than general praise. General statements such as "good job" or "great work" are vague and do not identify a specific behavior. A more effective statement would be "I like the strategy you used to solve the word problem." Specific praise has a great advantage because the child is told directly why he or she is being reinforced. Zentall and Morris (2010) offered additional guidance on specific praise. If teachers praise students for uncontrollable factors such as ability (e.g. "You are a great writer!"), this can lead to a lack of intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, if students are praised for controllable factors (e.g. "You worked so hard on that story!"), then they are

reinforced for a repeatable behavior. Thus, praising students for behaviors that they can control is more effective.

The way praise is delivered is also important. Madsen and colleagues (1968) encouraged teachers to deliver praise with a smile. They also suggested that teachers should vary the type of praise given so that students do not become habituated to one reinforcer. Praise should also be devoid of sarcasm. Students must feel that praise is sincere (Brophy, 1981).

Even when praise is contingent, frequent, specific, and delivered appropriately, students may not be reinforced. Students' personal preferences must also be considered. Brophy (1981) suggested that some students might even view praise as punishment (e.g., students may feel embarrassed if praised publicly). Teachers must monitor students' reactions to praise so that they can make changes if needed. However, most students do prefer specific and effort-focused praise (Burnett & Mandel, 2010).

Criticisms of praise. Praise has not escaped criticism, and some seems to be directed at ineffective praise (Brophy, 1981; Kohn, 2001). For example, Bennett (1988) criticized unspecific praise and praise that focuses on ability and personal qualities rather than on controllable behaviors. Others have noted that praise can have a detrimental effect on students. For example, Larivee (2002) discouraged the use of praise because she believes it creates dependency on teachers and manipulates children. Kohn (2001) also said that praise manipulates children, in addition to reducing achievement and lessening children's interest. These articles, however, were based on theory and speculation rather than empirical research. Other research has shown that praise does not reduce student motivation (Cameron & Pierce, 1994). Also, Strain and Joseph (2004) responded to Kohn's article by arguing that well-planned, well-implemented praise interventions have positive effects on children.

Effects of praise. Despite criticism, praise has been associated with a variety of positive outcomes. Praise can help children behaviorally, academically, and socially. First, praise can have a positive impact on student behavior. Praise has been associated with increased on-task behavior (Chalk & Bizo, 2004; Ferguson & Houghton, 1992; Sutherland et al., 2000) and attending behaviors (Cossairt et al., 1973).

Praise has also been associated with better academic outcomes. In addition to an increase in on-task behavior, ignoring of misbehaving peers, and hand-raising, Madsen and colleagues (1968) found that praise eventually led to a low-performing student moving to the highest arithmetic group. Praise has also been associated with increases in arithmetic response rates (Kirby & Shields, 1972).

Praise can also lead to better social outcomes. Gable and colleagues (2009) suggested that praise might improve teacher–student relationships. Burnett and Mandel (2010) found that students who reported having a good relationship with their teachers also reported that their teachers gave more positive feedback. In addition to improved relationships, teacher praise can lead to a more positive learning environment (Madsen et al., 1968).

Verbal and written praise. Most of the research, criticism, and benefits of praise discussed in this paper are related to verbal praise. While verbal praise has been studied extensively, written praise has not. There are relatively few research studies on praise notes. Using the search terms “praise note” and “written praise” resulted in 16 studies in PsychINFO and five in ERIC. This is significantly less than the studies found for the term “verbal praise” (212 in PsychINFO, 15 in ERIC).

Verbal praise has several advantages as an intervention. First, teachers prefer interventions that take little time (Gable et al., 2009), and verbal praise is a time-efficient

intervention that allows more time for classroom instruction (Sutherland et al., 2000). Verbal praise is also inexpensive (Brophy, 1981), naturalistic, and nonintrusive (Sutherland et al., 2000).

Praise notes are another method of delivering praise. Positive statements are written in notes, which can be given to students and shared with parents. Praise notes offer many of the same advantages as verbal praise, such as being cost effective and nonintrusive. While writing a praise statement may take more time than a verbal statement, praise notes may have additional reinforcing qualities. For example, students may receive more reinforcement when they bring praise notes home, as parents would have an opportunity to give praise. Also, praise notes are tangible and can be kept and read again at a later time, potentially reinforcing students long after the initial interaction with the teacher. Praise notes also have limitations, such as being limited to only students who can read.

There are relatively few studies on praise notes, but the results are encouraging. Recent studies have shown that written praise is associated with decreases in maladaptive student behavior, including social withdrawal (Nelson et al., 2008), office discipline referrals (Nelson et al., 2009), tardiness (Caldarella et al., 2011), and disruptive behavior in the lunchroom (Wheatley et al., 2009).

Types of praise note studies. As a PBS intervention, there are typically two types of praise note studies. One type involves praise notes as a third- or second-tier intervention. Research studies with this focus typically employ a single-subject design, targeting two to three students in a classroom. For example, Nelson and colleagues (2008) used a single-subject design to study the behavior of three socially withdrawn middle school students. Though the written praise notes were administered to all students in the classroom, the study specifically targeted the social behavior of these selected students, which significantly improved after the intervention.

Another type of written praise intervention occurs on a school-wide level as a first tier primary intervention. In these studies, praise notes are administered to all students, and school-wide data is reviewed. For example, after a school-wide praise note intervention in the lunchroom, Wheatley and colleagues (2009) found decreases in overall disruptive behavior in the lunchroom. Nelson and colleagues (2009) found that office discipline referrals dropped after a school-wide praise note intervention.

While these studies produced positive results, it is difficult to know the relative effects of praise notes. These studies included other components, such as direct instruction and rewards. All school-wide interventions included rewards, as students were given the opportunity to win prizes with their praise notes. A reward is something given to recognize an accomplishment, and is often equated with the words “merit” or “prize” (Maag, 2001). After reviewing several studies, Cameron and Pierce (1994) concluded that there is no reason not to implement such incentive systems. However, if these systems are in place, they must also have reinforcing qualities. As with praise, rewards are not equated with reinforcement unless the frequency of a behavior increases (Maag, 2001).

With characteristics of reinforcement, praise note interventions, and the rewards associated with them, can have a positive impact on student behavior. While it may be difficult to know the effect of praise notes alone, praise note systems have been associated with positive results. Praise notes have much potential but are not widely researched. In addition to considering the effectiveness of praise notes, it is also important to consider social validity.

Social Validity

The definition of PBS states that interventions must lead to “socially significant behavior change” (Sugai et al., 1999, p. 6). Socially significant change is comprehensive, durable, and

relevant. Because it must be socially significant, behavior change is important to consider when implementing interventions.

Social validity assessment can help examine social significance. Definitions of social validity have changed over time (Schwartz & Baer, 1991), but it generally refers to the assessment of social importance and acceptability of interventions (Gresham & Lopez, 1996; Kazdin, 1977; Wolf, 1978). Kazdin (1977) emphasized the concept of *acceptability* in social validity assessment. The acceptability of several domains should be evaluated, including the acceptability of the *focus* of the intervention, the acceptability of *procedures*, and the acceptability of *outcomes* of the intervention. Assessing acceptability can help improve intervention integrity and sustainability.

Purpose of social validity assessment. Practitioners may not accept interventions that research has shown to be effective (Walker et al., 1996). When implementing programs, it is often not sufficient to demonstrate that interventions change behavior (Gresham & Lopez, 2004); these changes must also be seen as important (Kazdin, 1977). A research-to-practice gap exists when practitioners do not use interventions that researchers develop (Carnine, 1997). Several factors may account for this gap; for example, practitioners may misunderstand the research, doubt the quality and efficacy of research, or be left out of the decision-making process (Carnine, 1997; Finn & Sladeczek, 2001). At times the reasons for research-to-practice gaps are unclear, and it can be confusing when effective interventions are rejected. By examining acceptability, social validity assessment can provide information about why interventions are not utilized.

Schwartz and Baer (1991) emphasized that social validity measures should be used to determine the *acceptability* of an intervention, and not the *effectiveness*. When a program is considered acceptable, it is more likely to be used and implemented. Because of this, assessing

acceptability can help sustain programs over time. Social validity data should be used to improve programs so that practitioners will continue to use them.

Effective social validity assessment. Schwartz and Baer (1991) discussed the importance of measuring social validity effectively. Social validity must be assessed in appropriate ways, or there is little reason to do it. Well-rounded assessment provides a more accurate picture of social validity. Social validity can be assessed through various methods, including surveys, questionnaires, direct observations, and interviews (Flinn & Sladeczek, 2001).

When using subjective research methods to determine social validity, those methods must be based on sound research practices (Schwartz & Baer, 1991). Several researchers have offered direction on designing subjective measures of social validity (Fawcett, 1991; Schwartz & Baer, 1991). When measuring social validity, it is important to consider (a) the population being examined, (b) the type of information gained from assessment, (c) the timing of assessment, and (d) the method and procedures used to examine social validity.

The first step in assessment is to identify the groups who should judge social validity; these people are called “consumer judges” (Fawcett, 1991). The level of social validity becomes clearer when more than one group is examined (Finn & Sladeczek, 2001). Schwartz and Baer (1991) identified several types of consumer judges, including direct consumers, indirect consumers, members of the immediate community, and members of the extended community. In school settings, direct consumers can include students and teachers (who may be directly influenced by interventions), and indirect consumers could be parents (who may be indirectly influenced by the interventions). Researchers should be careful to correctly assess the opinions of the relevant community.

Another consideration is the type of information gained from assessment. In many cases this is acceptability (Kazdin, 1977; Schwartz & Baer, 1991), but it can also include concepts such as the social significance of the *goals*, the social appropriateness of the *procedures*, and the social importance of the *effects* (Wolf, 1978). Other factors that could be considered are the required time and resources, as well as the intrusiveness of the intervention (Mitchem & Young, 2001).

When to assess social validity is another important consideration. Kennedy (1992) discussed how social validity can be examined before, during, or after intervention. Knowing stakeholder opinions before designing an intervention can be beneficial so that interventions can be tailored to stakeholders' preferences. Assessing social validity during and after intervention can also help identify changes that need to be made.

Another consideration is how social validity will be assessed. Kazdin (1977) wrote that social validity can be examined through two methods: social comparison and subjective evaluation. Social comparison determines significant change by comparing the behavior of targeted students to their peers. Subjective evaluation usually involves asking consumer judges about their perceptions of an intervention. This can be accomplished through several methods, including interviews, rating scales, and direct observations (Finn & Sladeczek, 2001). When rating scales are used, it is important to (a) offer a wide range of responses to choose from, (b) ask consumers to make use of the whole range of options, (c) limit responses to recent events, (d) ask a wide variety of questions, and (e) be very specific (Schwartz & Baer, 1991).

Social Validity and Praise.

Effectively assessing social validity is important in PBS, which should focus on interventions of social significance (Sugai et al., 1999). As a PBS intervention, praise should be

assessed for social validity. While studies have researched the effectiveness of praise, few have considered its acceptability or significance.

Elwell and Tiberio (1994) administered surveys to secondary school students to describe student perceptions of teacher praise. They found that students tend to view praise positively, and that the majority of students prefer private praise to public praise. Burnett (2001, 2010) also studied student perceptions of praise with a population of Australian elementary school students. Again, students reported positive views of praise, reporting that praise made them feel good. Results found that younger students prefer ability-focused feedback, and older students prefer effort-focused feedback. While these studies assessed the perceptions of students, no studies have included the perceptions of parents and teachers.

Only one praise note study included a social validity component. Nelson and colleagues (2008) implemented a peer-to-peer praise note intervention, after which they surveyed students for perceptions of the intervention. The perceptions of peer-written notes were positive, indicating that students would write praise notes again in other classes. However, there is no research on the social validity of teacher-written praise notes.

Purpose of the Study

Written praise has much potential as an intervention; however, praise notes do not appear to be used or researched as widely as they could be. As the effectiveness of praise notes continues to be researched, it is also important to examine social validity. If stakeholders do not accept written praise, then there is little reason to research or improve the intervention. Examining social validity can also help avoid research-to-practice gaps by making improvements based on stakeholder suggestions. The purpose of this study was to describe student, parent, and

teacher perceptions of a school-wide praise note intervention at an elementary school. Specific research questions were as follows:

1. What are elementary school teachers', parents', and students' perceptions of the social validity of a school-wide praise note intervention implemented as part of SWPBS?
2. Do elementary school teachers, parents, and students differ in their perceptions of the social validity of the praise note intervention?
3. Based on teacher, parent, and student perceptions, how could the praise note intervention be improved?

Chapter 3: Method

The methodology of this study was based on research conducted by Adams, Womack, Shatzer, and Caldarella (2008), which surveyed students, parents, and teachers regarding their perceptions of a home note program. In the current study, stakeholders participated in a survey about a school-wide praise note intervention implemented during the school year. The following sections describe how this was accomplished.

Research Design

This research was descriptive in nature and used survey methodology to identify stakeholder perceptions of praise notes. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) described several steps of conducting survey research: defining research objectives, selecting a sample, designing the questionnaire, pilot-testing the questionnaire, writing a cover letter, and analyzing questionnaire data. Efforts were made to conduct the study according to these suggestions as described below. The first step is to define research objectives, and, as previously mentioned, this study explored stakeholder perceptions of praise notes to determine differences between stakeholder groups and to determine how the intervention could be improved.

Participants

The second step identified by Gall and colleagues (2003) is to select a sample. For this study, I administered surveys to participants who were already involved in a school-wide praise note intervention. Participants were associated with a Title I elementary school in the Intermountain West. The school had an enrollment of 348 students attending grades K–6. Ethnicity consisted of the following: 63% Hispanic, 35% Caucasian, and 2% other (Pacific Islander, American Indian, Asian, and African American). Students qualifying for free and reduced lunch made up 80.9% of the student population, and 53% were English language

learners. Faculty included 21 teachers and two interns. I invited all faculty, parents, and students to complete the survey.

Twenty-three teachers, 203 parents, and 203 students participated in the study. Teacher demographics were 78% Caucasian, 9% Hispanic, and 5% other; 7% did not report ethnicity. Parent demographics were 19% Caucasian, 29% Hispanic, 4% other; 48% did not report ethnicity. Student demographics were as follows: 19% Caucasian, 30% Hispanic, 6% other; 45% did not report ethnicity. All teachers responded to English forms of the surveys. Fifty-six percent of parents and 73% of students responded to English forms of the surveys; 44% of parents and 27% of students responded to the Spanish forms.

Measures

The third step identified by Gall and colleagues (2003) is to design the questionnaire. I designed separate surveys, one for each stakeholder group (teachers, parents, and students), based on surveys developed by Adams and colleagues (2008). Each survey presented 13 items. Some appeared on all three surveys, but others were specific to each stakeholder group. Survey items were designed to assess the different domains of social validity noted by Wolf (1978): (a) the significance of program *goals*, (b) the appropriateness of the *procedures*, and (c) the importance of the *effects*. In general, items corresponding with goals and effects applied to all stakeholder groups. However, items about procedures were different across groups, as each group played a different role in the praise note intervention process. The last two questions were open-ended, allowing all participants to provide comments about what they liked and disliked about the praise note intervention. See Appendices A, B, and C for copies of the surveys.

I also collected demographic information, asking teachers for grade level taught, ethnicity, gender, years of teaching experience, and number of years at the school. I asked

parents for the grade level of their child, relationship to the child, ethnicity, and the number of years they have been associated with the school. Students were asked for grade level, gender, ethnicity, and age. All surveys were administered anonymously to encourage honest responding.

Participants rated each item using a five-point Likert scale: 1 (*Strongly Disagree*), 2 (*Disagree*), 3 (*Neutral*), 4 (*Agree*), and 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Students in grades K–2 received surveys with a five-point pictorial scale depicting sad and happy faces, in the pattern of others who have used pictorial scales as valid measures for younger children (Harter & Pike, 1984). Because of the school's large Hispanic population, the parent and student surveys were also translated into Spanish.

The fourth step in conducting a survey is pilot-testing (Gall et al., 2003). Teacher surveys were pilot-tested with two teacher education students and one teacher who had completed practicum training at the elementary school. The student surveys were pilot-tested with five students in grades K–2 and three students in grades 3–6. Parent surveys were pilot-tested with five native Spanish-speaking parents at one of the school's parent meetings. During pilot testing, all participants were familiar with the target elementary school. Minor changes, such as slight wording changes, were made to the survey items based on feedback obtained during pilot testing.

Procedure

As part of the school-wide PBS intervention, the school implemented praise notes in August. These notes were called Eagle Coins, which were small forms intended for teachers to write praise to their students. Eagle Coins were entered into a school-wide drawing. Prizes such as candy and hamburger coupons were given weekly to 10 students randomly drawn from the praise notes in the office. As in previous praise note studies, these additional rewards were an integral part of the praise note intervention. To address the possible effect that prizes may have

had on students, a survey item was included about the drawings.

Eagle Coins were used from August through the following May, though they were used more during the second half of the school year, following training by university personnel. The school administrators wanted to emphasize positive behavior support and praise notes in particular. To do this, they invited a group of university personnel to help improve the intervention. First, the Eagle Coin form was changed to be simpler for teachers. The original Eagle Coin required teachers to check more boxes and provide more information. The new format provided more space to write the praise and asked for less additional information (e.g., the time the note was written). See Figure 1 for a copy of the original Eagle Coin and Figure 2 for a copy of the revised Eagle Coin. The revised Eagle Coins were printed on three-part NCR (no carbon required) paper. After the notes were written, the office received one copy, the teacher kept another, and the student received the third. Teachers were not required to use their copies of the Eagle Coins, but some incorporated the notes into their classroom behavior plans.

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Student's First and Last: | | Teacher: | |
| _____ | | _____ | |
| Date: ___/___/___ | | Time: __:___ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Gym | <input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bus/Loading | <input type="checkbox"/> Hall | <input type="checkbox"/> Office | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Library | <input type="checkbox"/> Playground | |
| Specific Behavior Observed: | | | |
| _____ | | | |
| _____ | | | |
| Teacher Signature: | | | |
| _____ | | | |

Figure 1. Original Eagle Coin

| Eagle Coin | |
|---|-----------------|
| Student _____ | Location: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BE RESPONSIBLE <input type="checkbox"/> BE RESPECTFUL <input type="checkbox"/> BE SAFE | |
|  | |
| Teacher: _____ | Date: _____ |
| White Copy: Student Yellow Copy: Office Pink Copy: Teacher | |

Figure 2. Revised Eagle Coin

The university personnel also led a faculty-training meeting in December. Teachers were introduced to the new praise note format and were trained on delivering praise. In particular, teachers were taught that specific, frequent praise is more effective than general, infrequent praise. The potential benefits of praise notes were also described, such as improved behavior and positive relationships. Teachers were encouraged to use more praise and write more Eagle Coins.

During the intervention, the teachers received weekly reports comparing the number of Eagle Coins they had written with the school average of praise notes. This appeared to motivate many teachers to write more Eagle Coins, as the number of praise notes written increased dramatically after the training. Figure 3 shows the average number of praise notes written per month during the school year. Given that the social validity survey was administered at the end of the school year, it was assumed stakeholders were rating the new praise note intervention.

The next step of conducting a survey is to write a cover letter (Gall et al., 2003). At the end of the school year, teachers, parents, and students received consent forms and the social validity surveys. These were sent home with a cover letter from the principal explaining the

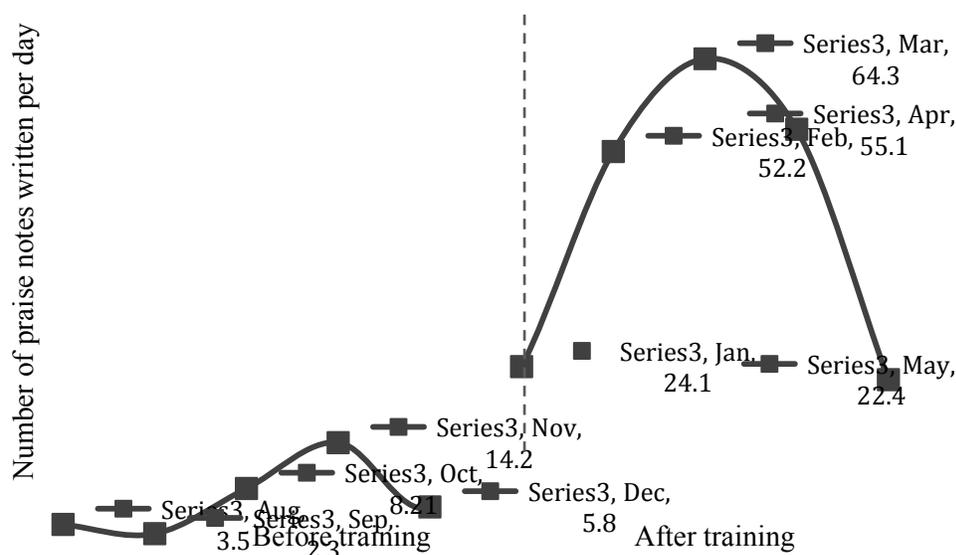


Figure 3. School average of praise notes written per day

purpose and nature of the research. The consent forms provided information about confidentiality, reasons for the research, and served as a cover letter. See Appendix D for copies of the consent forms.

Teachers completed the survey at a faculty meeting. Parents and students received surveys in an envelope brought home by the child, and both groups responded to the surveys at home. Younger students most likely received help from their parents, especially while responding to open-ended questions.

The school administration reported that the immigration status of a number of the parents caused a disincentive for signing a consent document, so parents were not required to sign the consent form. Because of this, student and parent surveys were sent home together; passive consent was implied when surveys were returned to the school. Students and parents returned surveys to the teachers.

Data Analysis

The final step of conducting survey research is to analyze the data (Gall et al., 2003). Since this research was descriptive in nature, using survey methodology, I used descriptive statistics to summarize perceptions of the praise note intervention and calculated the percentage of respondents who agreed with each survey item. Agreement was defined as a response of 4 or 5 on the five-point Likert scale. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine differences between participants (i.e., teachers, students, parents). Overlapping survey questions allowed for an analysis of differences between the groups. Each individual stakeholder group was also analyzed separately.

The open-ended comments were analyzed qualitatively, following the methods of Corbin and Strauss (2007) and Miles and Huberman (1994). As the primary researcher, I worked with an upper-level psychology undergraduate student to code the responses. We independently reviewed the open-ended responses and found themes. We then worked together and made a list of common themes based on both of our findings, grouping the comments according to these themes and calculating the percentage of participants whose comments fit the themes. After these individual analyses were completed, the results of each group were examined and compared for similarities or differences across groups.

Chapter 4: Results

Perceptions of Participants

The first research question was “What are elementary school teachers’, parents’, and students’ perceptions of the social validity of a school-wide praise note intervention implemented as part of SWPBS?” To answer this question, this section will describe quantitative and qualitative results for each stakeholder group (see Table 1). Results are also organized by the goals, procedures, and effects of the praise note intervention (Wolf, 1978).

Teachers’ quantitative perceptions. Twenty-three teachers responded to the quantitative survey items. Four items on the teacher survey focused on the *goals* of the praise note intervention. The item with the highest percentage of agreement was “Students should be praised for appropriate classroom behavior,” with all teachers agreeing. More than 80% of the teachers agreed that praise notes should continue to be used next year. Agreement for the item “Eagle Coins are an important way of communicating my expectations to students” was 65.2%. For the item “Eagle Coins are an important part of my communication with parents,” 30.4% of teachers agreed, 43.5% were neutral or unsure, and 26.1% disagreed—the lowest level of agreement for any item on the teacher survey.

Four of the teacher survey items focused on the praise note intervention *procedures*. Agreement was highest (73.9%) for “Students should receive at least one Eagle Coin a week.” Just under half (45.5%) of teachers agreed that tracking praise notes was easy for them to manage. Just 39.1% agreed with the item “Students would like Eagle Coins even if the school stopped doing prize drawings.” More teachers disagreed (43.4%) than agreed (39.1%) with the item “Eagle Coins take too much time.”

Table 1
Percentage of Participants Who Agreed on Praise Note Survey Items

| Items | % of teachers (n=23) | % of parents (n=203) | % of students (n=203) |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Students should be praised for appropriate classroom behavior. | 100.0 | 93.1 | 98.5 |
| Students like receiving praise notes. | 100.0 | 92.6 | 94.0 |
| Praise notes should continue to be used next year. | 81.8 | 93.1 | 92.2 |
| Parents like it when their children receive praise notes. | 39.1 | 94.6 | 92.5 |
| Praise notes help students improve their classroom behavior. | 81.8 | 82.3 | 88.7 |
| Students would like praise notes even if the school stopped giving prizes. | 39.1 | 61.8 | 64.9 |
| Students should receive at least one praise note each week. | 73.9 | 67.0 | - |
| Praise notes are an important part of teacher communication with parents. | 30.4 | 69.5 | - |
| Praise notes are an important way of communicating teacher expectations to students. | 65.2 | - | 91.5 |
| Praise notes help strengthen teachers' relationships with students. | 65.2 | - | 76.2 |
| Praise notes helped parents and children talk to each other about school. | - | 79.6 | 72.4 |
| Students received enough praise notes. | - | 72.2 | 65.3 |
| Teachers like the praise note part of their school programming. | 65.2 | - | - |
| Tracking praise notes is easy for teachers to manage. | 45.5 | - | - |
| Praise notes take too much time. | 39.1 | - | - |
| Parents praise their child when he/she brings praise notes home. | - | 95.0 | - |
| It is important for parents to know that their child is being praised at school. | - | 92.6 | - |
| Praise notes have improved parents' relationship with their child's teacher. | - | 61.9 | - |
| Students try to get praise notes at school. | - | - | 94.5 |
| Students enjoy bringing praise notes home to their parents. | - | - | 90.6 |
| Praise notes help students know what they're supposed to do in school. | - | - | 82.6 |

Five items focused on the *outcomes* or effects of the praise note intervention. All teachers agreed that students liked receiving praise notes. More than 80% agreed that praise notes helped improve students' classroom behavior. More than half (65.2%) of teachers indicated that they both liked the praise note part of their school programming and that praise notes helped strengthen their relationships with students. More than half (56.5%) of teachers were neutral or unsure about whether parents liked it when their children received praise notes, while only 39.1% of teachers agreed with this item.

Teachers' qualitative perceptions. Of the 23 teachers who responded to the survey, 65% responded with comments regarding what they liked, and 52% responded with comments regarding what they disliked. The positive-to-negative comment ratio was 1.14:1. After reviewing the responses, three main themes were found for the positive comments, and three themes were found for the negative comments. Themes representing less than 20% of teacher comments were not included due to the low N. Because many of the comments included more than one theme, the percentages do not add up to 100%. Tables 2 and 3 include the themes regarding what teachers liked and disliked about the intervention. Appendix E provides a full list of teacher comments.

The most common theme was that praise notes helped reinforce appropriate student behavior; 46.7% of positive comments included this theme. For example, teachers wrote, "Students do perform to get an Eagle Coin" and "A great way to show the class who was modeling appropriate behavior." The second most common theme was that teachers liked the praise note form; over a quarter (26.7%) of the positive comments included this idea. For example, teachers wrote, "They are simple to fill out" and "I liked the triplicate form." Also,

20% of comments suggested that students liked praise notes (“Students get excited about them” and “My students love the Eagle Coins”).

Table 2
What Was Most Liked about Praise Notes and Percentage of Participant Comments Included in Each Theme

| Theme | % of teachers (<i>n</i> =15) | % of parents (<i>n</i> =138) | % of students (<i>n</i> =131) |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Child's appropriate behavior is reinforced | 46.7 | 56.5 | 32.1 |
| Teachers like the form | 26.7 | | |
| Students like Eagle Coins | 20.0 | | |
| Child feels positive emotions | | 21.0 | |
| Child receives prizes | | | 37.4 |

Regarding what teachers disliked about the intervention, 41.7% of comments included the theme “Praise notes take too much time.” Teacher comments included “They take too long to fill out” and “The time it takes to write during class time can be challenging.” One third of negative comments mentioned a dislike for the procedure (“It is cumbersome to fill out a form in triplicate to praise a student” and “The carbon copies don’t always copy through”). A quarter of teacher comments mentioned that the praise notes lost effectiveness (“Students are getting bored—these are losing their effectiveness” and “After a couple of weeks of giving an increase of coins, I feel like they completely lost their effectiveness—my students don’t care about them as much”).

Parents’ quantitative perceptions. Four items on the parent survey focused on the *goals* of the praise note intervention. More than 90% of parents agreed that praise notes should be used the following year, that children should be praised for appropriate behavior, and that it is

important for parents to know that their child is being praised at school. Approximately 70% of parents agreed that praise notes were an important part of teacher communication with parents.

Table 3
What Was Most Disliked about Praise Notes and Percentage of Participant Comments Included in Each Theme

| Theme | % of teachers (n=13) | % of parents (n=40) | % of students (n=49) |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Eagle Coins take time | 41.7 | | |
| Teacher dislikes the procedure | 33.3 | | |
| Eagle Coins are losing effectiveness | 25.0 | | |
| Child should receive more Eagle Coins | | 20.0 | 22.0 |
| Child wants more prizes | | | 22.0 |
| Child did not receive Eagle Coins when deserved | | | 20.0 |

Four items focused on the praise note intervention *procedures*. The highest percentage of agreement on the parent survey (95%) was for the item “I praise my child when he/she brings an Eagle Coin home.” Most parents also agreed that their child received an adequate number of praise notes (72.2%) and that students should receive a praise note each week (67%). The lowest percentage of agreement on the parent survey (61.8%) was for the item “My child would like Eagle Coins even if the school stopped doing prize drawings.”

Five items focused on the *outcomes* or effects of the intervention. More than 90% of parents agreed that their child liked receiving praise notes and that they were happy when their child received praise notes. Parents also agreed that praise notes helped improve their child’s school behavior (82.3%) and that praise notes helped them talk to their child about school (79.6%). A majority of parents (61.9%) agreed that praise notes improved their relationship with

their child's teacher; almost one third of parents (31.3%) were neutral or unsure on this item, the highest percentage in the Neutral/Not sure category for the parent survey.

Parents' qualitative perceptions. Of the 203 parents who responded to the survey, 68% responded to the open-ended questions regarding what they liked, and 20% responded regarding what they disliked, yielding a positive-to-negative comment ratio of 3.93:1. After reviewing the responses, two main themes were found for the positive comments, and one theme was found for the negative comments. Themes representing less than 20% of parent comments were not included due to the low N. Because many of the comments included more than one theme, the percentages do not add up to 100%. Tables 2 and 3 include the themes regarding what parents liked and disliked about the intervention. Appendix F provides a full list of parent comments.

The most common theme was that praise notes reinforced appropriate behavior; 56.5% of positive comments included this theme. Parents wrote, "They motivate my children to keep studying, behave well in class and with the teachers" and "I like that they focus on the good the students are doing and letting the student know their good behavior is noticed." The second theme, which included 21% of comments, was that children feel positive emotions after receiving praise notes ("It is great to encourage self-confidence... makes kids feel important and respected" and "I like that my daughter feels good; like that they make her feel important"). Regarding what parents disliked about the intervention, 20% of comments included the theme that students should receive more praise notes ("Sometimes I would like to see more of them" and "Give more of them more often").

Students' quantitative perceptions. Three items on the student survey focused on the *goals* of the praise note intervention. The highest percentage of agreement on the student survey (98.5%) was for the item "Students should get Eagle Coins for doing good things in school."

Almost all students agreed that they would like it if praise notes were continued next year (92.2%) and that praise notes help them know what classroom behavior their teachers like (91.5%).

Four items focused on the praise note intervention *procedure*. Almost all students agreed that they try to earn praise notes (94.5%) and that they enjoy bringing praise notes home (90.6%). In contrast, 65.3% of students agreed that they received enough praise notes. The lowest percentage of agreement on the student survey (64.9%) was for the item “I would like Eagle Coins even if the school stopped giving prizes.”

Six items focused on the outcomes or effects of the intervention. Almost all students agreed that they liked receiving praise notes (94.0%) and that their parents were happy when praise notes were brought home (92.5%). Students also agreed that praise notes helped improve their classroom behavior (88.7%) and that praise notes helped them know what to do in school (82.6%). In addition, students agreed that praise notes helped them get along better with their teacher (76.2%) and that praise notes helped them talk to their parents about school (72.4%).

Students’ qualitative perceptions. Of the 203 students who responded to the survey, 65% responded to the open-ended questions regarding what they liked, and 25% responded regarding what they disliked. The positive-to-negative comment ratio was 2.94:1. After reviewing the responses, two main themes were found for the positive comments, and three themes were found for the negative comments. Themes representing less than 20% of student comments were not included. Because many of the comments included more than one theme, the percentages do not add up to 100%. Tables 2 and 3 include the themes regarding what students liked and disliked about the intervention. Appendix G provides a full list of students’ comments.

The most common theme (37.5% of comments) was that students liked receiving prizes. For example, students wrote, “I can win prizes” and “I get prizes for being good.” The second theme was that praise notes reinforce appropriate behavior, comprising 32.1% of comments (“They helped me be good in school” and “They let me know that I did good things”).

Regarding what students disliked about praise notes, the most common themes were that students should receive more praise notes (“I don’t get enough” and “Hardly got any”) and more prizes (“I don’t like when I get Eagle Coins and not a prize” and “How they don’t give everybody a prize”). These themes each included 22.2% of negative comments. About the same percentage (20.0%) included the theme that students do not receive praise notes when they are deserved (“Sometimes I don’t get Eagle Coins even if I’m being good” and “What I don’t like about the Eagle Coins is that they don’t give them to us when we do good things, and that doesn’t seem cool to me”).

Differences Among Participants’ Perceptions

The second research question was “Do elementary school teachers, students, and parents differ in their perceptions of the social validity of the praise note intervention?” To answer the question, this section compares overlapping survey items and differing qualitative themes between stakeholder groups.

Quantitative results. Six items overlapped across teacher, parent, and student surveys (see Table 1). Participants strongly agreed with most of these items. Almost 100% of participants agreed that students liked receiving praise notes and that students should be praised for appropriate classroom behavior. A strong majority of participants also agreed that praise notes helped improve student behavior and that praise notes should be used next year.

Of the six overlapping items, one-way ANOVA results indicated that three of the items were significantly different across stakeholder groups (see Table 4). Bonferonni's post hoc tests were used to determine the nature of the differences between groups. Results indicated that

Table 4
Stakeholder Differences for Overlapping Survey Items (N=429)

| Item | Teacher <i>M (SD)</i> | Parent <i>M (SD)</i> | Student <i>M (SD)</i> | <i>F</i> |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Praise notes help students improve their classroom behavior. | 4.09 (0.68) | 4.19 (0.84) | 4.39 (0.86) | 3.52* |
| Parents like it when their children receive praise notes. | 3.52 (0.85) | 4.57 (0.70) | 4.62 (0.73) | 24.43*** |
| Students should be praised for appropriate classroom behavior. | 4.83 (0.39) | 4.59 (0.67) | 4.73 (0.56) | 10.90*** |
| Praise notes are an important part of communication with parents. | 3.09 (1.13) | 3.92 (1.01) | - | 13.52*** |
| Praise notes are an important way of communicating teacher expectations to students. | 4.00 (0.85) | - | 4.59 (0.68) | 14.64*** |
| Students received enough praise notes this year. - | - | 3.99 (0.98) | 3.75 (1.26) | 4.31* |

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

students rated "Praise notes help students improve their classroom behavior" significantly higher than teachers and parents. Both parents and students rated "Parents like it when their children receive praise notes" significantly higher than teachers, and teachers and students rated "Students should be praised for appropriate classroom behavior" significantly higher than parents.

Some survey items were only presented to two stakeholder groups. One-way ANOVA results indicate that three of these items were significantly different between groups (see Table 4). Parents rated "Praise notes are an important part of teacher communication with parents"

significantly higher than teachers. Parents also rated “Students received an adequate number of praise notes this year” significantly higher than students. On the other hand, students rated “Praise notes are an important way of communicating teacher expectations to students” significantly higher than teachers.

Qualitative results. More participants responded to the open-ended questions with favorable comments than negative comments. Parents had the highest positive-to-negative comment ratio (3.93:1), students had the next highest ratio (2.94:1), and teachers had the lowest (1.14:1).

One qualitative theme overlapped across all stakeholder groups: “Praise notes reinforce student’s good behavior.” Teachers and parents both liked that students felt positively about the praise notes; common themes were “Students like praise notes” and “Students feel positive emotions.” Rather than reporting positive feelings about praise notes, more students liked that praise notes helped them win prizes. While almost 40% of students mentioned prizes, less than 5% of parent comments included this theme.

Parents only had one theme regarding what they disliked, which they shared with students. This theme was “Students should receive more praise notes.” The other student theme was “Students should receive more prizes.” Teachers focused more on the intervention procedure, with themes regarding the time and effort required for praise notes. Another common teacher theme not mentioned by other groups was “Praise notes lose effectiveness.” Students and parents did not express concerns about students becoming bored with praise notes.

Participants’ Suggestions for Improvement of Praise Notes

The last research question was “Based on teacher, student, and parent perceptions, how could the praise note intervention be improved?” To answer this question, common trends were

examined between the lower-rated survey items and the most common negative themes in the open-ended survey questions.

For each stakeholder group, the item “Students would like Eagle Coins even if the school stopped giving prizes” was among the lowest percentage of agreement of all survey items. Teachers rated this item the lowest, while parents and students also rated it relatively low. Similarly, one of the largest concerns expressed in the negative student comments was “Students should receive more prizes.” Some parents also had suggestions for improving prize distribution, but no parents suggested that prizes should stop altogether.

Some trends were also found between teachers’ lowest rated items and most common negative qualitative themes. First, some teachers felt that praise notes take too much time; this was also the most common theme found among negative comments. On the quantitative portion, almost equal percentages of teachers agreed and disagreed with the item “Eagle Coins take too much time.” Second, some teachers disliked the praise note procedure. Less than half of teachers agreed that tracking praise notes was easy for them to manage. Also, “Teachers do not like the procedure” was the second most common theme found among negative comments.

Chapter 5: Discussion

While a few studies have described student perceptions of praise, no studies have examined teacher or parent perceptions. This study is the first to examine the social validity of praise notes by describing teacher, parent, and student perceptions.

Reflections on Findings

Overall, participants had positive perceptions of the praise note intervention system. Positive results from the surveys' quantitative and qualitative sections suggest that the social validity of praise notes was high. While participants generally had positive perceptions of praise notes, some improvements can be made based on findings from the survey. The following sections will discuss stakeholder perceptions of praise notes, recommendations for future interventions, and limitations and future research associated with this study.

Participants' positive perceptions of praise notes. Participants' positive views of the praise notes were confirmed by several quantitative and qualitative responses on the survey. The majority of each stakeholder group indicated that they liked the praise notes. In particular, participants liked the intervention's focus on appropriate behavior and the positive emotions expressed by students after receiving a note. Positive interventions are more effective and more likely to be accepted by educators (Bowen et al., 2004). Participants' positive views contribute to the social validity of praise notes.

The majority of teachers were positive about the praise notes. Considering that teachers did most of the work and received little direct benefit from the intervention, this indicates that teachers accepted the praise notes. One reason for teachers' acceptance could be their observation of improved student behavior, which other research has also demonstrated (Caldarella et al., 2011; Nelson et al., 2008).

The vast majority of parents also agreed that they liked the praise note intervention, and students also indicated that their parents felt positively about the praise notes. Teachers, however, seemed unaware of parents' positive perceptions. In spite of parents' positive responses, more than half of teachers indicated they were unsure if parents liked praise notes. This gap suggests that there are opportunities for improving communication between parents and teachers about praise notes.

The vast majority of all stakeholder groups agreed that students liked receiving praise notes. This is supported by other research findings; for example, Elwell and Tiberio (1994) found that students generally viewed praise positively. Nelson and colleagues (2008) also found that middle-school students liked praise notes. One reason why many teachers and parents liked the intervention was because students felt positively towards praise notes. For example, parents described the emotions that students felt after receiving praise notes, including happiness, pride, and confidence.

Buy-in and sustainability of praise notes. Results also indicated that there was a good level of buy-in for the praise note intervention, as the majority of participants agreed that praise notes should continue to be used the following year. Buy-in is essential to implementing PBS interventions (Kincaid et al., 2007). Because teachers were the group implementing the intervention, it was particularly important to have a good level of teacher buy-in. Approximately 82% of teachers agreed that praise notes should be continued the following year.

Despite this level of agreement, some teachers commented that praise notes lost effectiveness over time. In open-ended responses, teachers indicated that some students stopped caring about or became bored with the praise notes. However, other survey responses suggested that students were still motivated to earn praise notes. For example, the vast majority of students

agreed that they tried to earn praise notes at school. Because the survey was administered at the end of the school year, this suggests that students still found praise notes motivating. In open-ended responses, students also noted frustration for not receiving a deserved praise note, suggesting that they were not bored with the praise notes. Teacher perceptions are important to consider however, as perceived effectiveness is tied to treatment fidelity, making it problematic if teachers consider the intervention to be potentially less effective (Gresham & Lopez, 1996).

Survey items addressing the quantity of praise notes showed that parents and students felt that they had received enough praise notes that year. However, this finding was contradicted by the qualitative responses. The most common reason parents and students gave for disliking praise notes was that students did not receive enough of them. Though students may have felt that they received an adequate number of praise notes, it appears that they would have liked to receive even more. Despite this, the majority of participants indicated they wanted praise notes to continue the following year. Effective interventions are sustainable over time (Walker et al., 1996); because praise notes were still motivating at the end of the intervention, this supports the sustainability and social validity of praise notes.

Impact of praise notes on student classroom behavior. PBS interventions should focus on “socially significant behavior change” (Sugai et al., 1999, p. 6). Social validity assessment can help examine perceptions of significant and worthwhile behavior change. Past research has begun to show an association between praise notes and positive changes in behavior, such as decreased social withdrawal (Nelson et al., 2008), tardiness (Caldarella et al., 2011), and office discipline referrals (Nelson et al., 2009). However, demonstrating the effectiveness of interventions is not enough (Gresham & Lopez, 2004); they must also be accepted by stakeholders. Research-to-practice gaps occur when practitioners do not use interventions

developed by researchers (Carnine, 1997). The majority of participants in this study agreed that they liked praise notes and that the notes helped improved student behavior, suggesting there is not a research-to-practice gap for praise notes.

Though the majority of participants agreed that praise notes helped improve student behavior, there was a significant difference between teachers' and students' perceptions; fewer teachers agreed on this item. Perhaps students noticed smaller improvements in their behavior and counted those as more significant. On the other hand, perhaps teachers had a more accurate perception as the group delivering praise notes. Also, teachers may have expected significant improvement for their effort, as they were the ones putting in the most effort in creating praise notes. Despite this, it is important to emphasize that the majority of teachers agreed with this item. Overall, participants had positive views of changes in student behavior.

Participants also liked that praise notes reinforced appropriate student behavior; this was the only qualitative theme found for all groups. Positive interventions are more likely to be accepted by educators than methods focusing on problem behavior (Bowen et al., 2004). Thus, the focus on positive behavior contributes to the social validity of praise notes.

Also, the vast majority of participants agreed that students should be praised for appropriate classroom behavior. Notably, all teachers agreed with this item. While some critics of praise believe that it manipulates children and decreases motivation (Kohn, 2001; Larivee, 2002), these participants had more positive views of praise. There was a significant difference between teachers and parents on this item, however. While the majority of both groups agreed with the item, parents did not agree as much as teachers. This suggests that there may be opportunities for interventions to help teach parents the importance of praising their children.

Overall, however, the goal of praising appropriate behavior was accepted by all stakeholder groups.

Relationships between teachers, parents, and students. Improving student-teacher, teacher-parent, and parent-student relationships is associated with better outcomes at school (Mapp, 2003; Powell, Son, File, & San Juan, 2010; Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). The majority of stakeholders agreed that praise notes helped improve these relationships. Thus, praise notes appear to have the potential to strengthen all of these relationships.

Participants agreed that praise notes helped improve student-teacher relationships. Praise has been speculated to help improve these relationships because it helps teachers focus on positive qualities of students (Brophy, 1981; Gable et al., 2009). Burnett and Mandel (2010) found that general praise had no impact on student-teacher relationships; however, students did report better relationships when teachers gave effort-focused feedback and when there was a positive atmosphere in the classroom. Effective praise can lead to improved student-teacher relationships, based on the findings of Burnett and Mandel (2010), as well as the findings of the current study.

It also appears that praise notes can also help improve parent-child relationships. Parents and students agreed that praise notes helped them talk to each other about school. Children tend to have better outcomes when their parents are involved with their schooling (Hill & Taylor, 2004; Jeynes, 2005; Mapp, 2003), so the resulting parent-child communication about school is beneficial. Also, the vast majority of students agreed that they enjoyed bringing praise notes home. Perhaps one reason they enjoyed this was because their parents praised them more, as the vast majority of parents agreed that they praised their child after he or she received a praise note. In fact, this was the highest-rated item for parents. Thus, praise notes give parents opportunities

to interact with their children in positive ways. Other research has shown that parent reinforcement of appropriate school behavior can help students change their behavior more efficiently (Barth, 1979).

Similarly, praise notes appear to help improve parent-teacher relationships, particularly from the parents perspective. The majority of parents agreed that praise notes helped improve their relationship with their child's teacher. This could be because parents were happy to know that teachers recognized good qualities and appropriate behavior in their children. Praise notes may also have validated their parenting by communicating that their child was behaving appropriately at school. Praise notes also show parents that the teacher knows their child. Perhaps for these reasons, parents indicated a desire to know that their child was being praised at school.

Communication between teachers, parents, and students. Because schools have traditionally focused on negative behavior (Walker et al., 1996), parents may be accustomed to hearing from the school only when their child misbehaves. When teacher communication is infrequent, parents may assume that any communication means bad news (Cameron & Lee, 1997). Praise notes, however, are a positive form of teacher-parent communication.

The majority of parents agreed that praise notes were an important part of teacher-parent communication. Other research has shown that parents have more favorable attitudes when schools attempt to increase school-family interaction via school-to-home communication (Adams et al., 2008). Teachers can help increase this interaction by communicating positive behaviors through good news phone calls and discussion about students' strengths (Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2010). Praise notes can be an important part of such positive school-to-home communication.

Teachers had different views from parents, as less than half of teachers agreed that praise notes were an important part of their communication to parents. This implies that praise notes seemed to be more important to parents than teachers realized. Informing teachers of the potential of praise notes for communicating with parents would be important.

The majority of teachers and students agreed that praise notes were an important way of communicating teacher expectations to students. Also, most students agreed that praise notes helped them know how they were supposed to behave in school. These results align with the work of Brophy (1981), who noted that, when praise is specific and contingent, students know what they are being praised for and can replicate those behaviors in the future.

While the majority of teachers and students agreed that praise notes were a way of communicating these behavioral expectations, there was a significant difference between groups; students agreed much more than teachers. This suggests that teachers may underestimate the importance of praise notes for communicating behavioral expectations. Research has shown that decreases in negative behavior are associated with establishing clear expectations (Fairbanks et al., 2007). Praise notes are a way to communicate these expectations. Praise notes could also help parents learn what the teacher expects from students. When parents reinforce the same behavior as teachers, student behavior improves more quickly (Barth, 1979).

Time and procedure for praise notes. Time-efficient interventions are more likely to be accepted (Mitchem & Young, 2001), so it is an important consideration in social validity assessment. Quantitative and qualitative survey results somewhat contradict each other on this issue. On the quantitative items, more teachers indicated that praise notes did not take too much time; however, the most common qualitative theme for teachers was “Praise notes take time.” Overall, praise notes appeared to be time-efficient, but there were still some concerns. While

praise notes may be more time-efficient than many interventions, they still required time for teachers to complete.

Also, there were some teachers who liked the praise note form and some who did not. Less than half of teachers agreed that tracking praise notes is easy for them to manage. On the qualitative section, however, many teachers mentioned that they liked the praise note form. In particular, teachers liked how the forms were simple, easy, and quick to fill out. On the other hand, some teachers disliked the praise note form or procedure. Because teachers were the only group to write praise notes, it follows that they would mention the procedure more than other groups. Again, the praise note form seemed to be acceptable, although improvements could still be made.

Effects of prizes with praise notes. The majority of both parents and students agreed that students would like praise notes without prize drawings, though this was the lowest-rated item for both groups. Teachers rated this item much lower, with the majority disagreeing. Many teachers may have had a lower opinion of praise notes and thought that much of the enthusiasm towards praise notes was due to the prizes. Parents and students, however, appeared to think that praise notes would still be valued without the prize drawings.

Still, it seemed that many participants were unsure how much prizes contributed to students' enthusiasm for the praise notes. The most common qualitative theme for students was that praise notes helped them win prizes. Of all the benefits that praise notes offer, it is interesting that this is what students mentioned most often. In addition, one of the most common suggestions from students was that they wanted more prizes. Few parents and no teachers mentioned prizes in their comments, perhaps because students are more directly reinforced by prizes.

Prizes are a common element of school-wide praise note interventions, and other studies have not separated praise notes from prizes (Nelson et al., 2009; Wheatley et al., 2009). The use of rewards may be appropriate as long as they have effective characteristics of reinforcement; then they can be effective in changing student behavior (Cameron & Pierce, 1994). While teachers and parents did not mention prizes as a benefit, they did not indicate that prizes should stop altogether.

Recommendations Regarding the Use of Praise Notes

Assessing social validity and making subsequent adjustments can be an important part of program vitality (Schwartz & Baer, 1991). From this social validity assessment, it is clear that participants accepted the praise note intervention; however, some improvements can be made to ensure the continued use of praise notes. This section will discuss trends and offer recommendations based on the findings.

Use in conjunction with prizes. Prizes were important to students, according to quantitative and qualitative findings. Teachers were especially doubtful of students' enthusiasm for praise notes without prizes, but the majority of parents and students agreed that students would still like praise notes. Based on these findings, schools could try using only praise notes for primary tier interventions, while prizes could be used more with students at secondary or tertiary tiers. Other praise note studies have included prizes as an element of the intervention (Nelson et al., 2009; Wheatley et al., 2009).

Communication of appreciation for teachers. Though parents were extremely positive about praise notes, teachers seemed unaware of this. Considering that parents have such positive views, it could be helpful for teachers to know that their efforts were appreciated. Teachers should be told about parents' appreciation for praise notes, as well the good it does at home.

Teachers could be informed of parents' perceptions in teacher-training meetings. In one school with a praise note intervention, a parent wrote a praise note to the teacher to thank her for writing praise notes (P. Caldarella, personal communication, October 24, 2011). Perhaps groups such as the Parent-Teacher Association could encourage parents to similarly express appreciation to the teachers for writing praise notes. This could help teachers become more aware of the value parents place on the praise notes.

If teachers are looking for ways to strengthen parent-child relationships, then praise notes could be used. Because perceived parental support is associated with students' academic achievement (Annear & Yates, 2010), finding ways to strengthen parent-child relationships is important. Teachers should also remember that they are not only writing praise notes to the student, but also to the parent. Praise notes can give parents information about what is going on at school, including teacher expectations and feedback on their student's behavior.

Suggested procedure for awarding praise notes. One of the teachers' primary concerns about the praise note intervention was time. From the open-ended responses, it appeared that the most difficult part was writing praise notes immediately after an appropriate behavior occurred; it is likely disruptive to stop class to write a praise note. In open-ended responses, some teachers noted that they worked around the problem by pre-writing praise notes and filling in the name after the behavior occurred. Other teachers asked students to pick up their praise notes after class, rather than writing them in the moment. While these ideas save time, they may weaken reinforcement if praise is too general or delayed. It is recommended that praise be specific and timely if time-saving strategies are used.

The procedure, especially the praise note form, was another theme mentioned by teachers. Half of the teachers disliked the form, and the other half liked it. The teachers who

liked the form mentioned how it was easier to fill out than previous versions of the praise notes. Most teachers who did not like the form mentioned a dislike for the triplicate copies. It is recommended that the praise note form be simplified as much as possible to minimize time and effort for teachers.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Survey results provided information about participants' positive perceptions of the praise note intervention, as well as suggestions for improvement. Still, there were some limitations associated with this study. One limitation of this study was that the survey was administered in only one elementary school. To capture overall perceptions of praise notes, the survey would need to be administered in other schools implementing school-wide praise notes. Another limitation was that not all participants returned surveys to the school. About 60% of students and their parents returned surveys, and those participants may have had different perceptions than those who did not return the survey. Future researchers should strive to survey a more complete and representative sample of participants.

Another limitation of this study was that the survey was not tested for psychometric properties. Because of this, the survey's validity and reliability are unknown. Different wording might have yielded different results. Future research could test the survey's validity and reliability. Another limitation was that there was no pre-assessment of social validity study before the praise note format was changed.

Another limitation was that the survey examined the participants' perceptions of behavior and not students' actual behavior. While participants' perceptions of student behavior change align with previous research (Caldarella et al., in press; Nelson et al., 2008; Nelson et al., 2009),

future studies should use surveys and direct observations to study both the perceptions and more direct behavior outcomes.

Also, social validity is best assessed through several methods, such as surveys, interviews, and observations (Flinn & Sladeczek, 2001). Only surveys were used to examine the social validity in this study. Future research should use more than one method of social validity assessment. Also, social validity can be assessed before, during, and after the intervention (Kennedy, 1992). The current study only examined stakeholder perceptions after the intervention ended; future studies could assess social validity at different points during the intervention.

This study examined broad perceptions related to praise notes, including relationships, behavior, and effectiveness. Future studies could research these perceptions in more depth. For example, participants were unsure if students would like praise notes without the prizes; a future study could implement the praise note intervention without prizes to see how students would respond. Other research could examine how stakeholder perceptions change based on the number of notes written or how praise notes specifically change relationships and communication.

Conclusions

The results of the current study demonstrated that praise notes were viewed as socially valid by the groups who used them, including teachers, parents, and students. These stakeholder groups had overall positive perceptions of the praise note intervention, including that praise notes helped improve student behavior, relationships, and communication. From survey results, it also appears that praise notes have a good level of buy-in and potential for sustainability.

Improvements can be made to increase intervention sustainability. As the group contributing the most time and effort towards praise notes, teachers should have improvements geared towards helping them. For example, praise note forms and procedures should be made as

simple as possible. Also, teachers should be made aware of parent and student perceptions of praise notes, to help teachers know that their efforts to reinforce appropriate student behavior are appreciated.

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Appendix A: Teacher Survey

Teacher Name _____ Grade _____ Gender _____
 Ethnicity _____ # of years at Farrer _____ # of years teaching experience _____

Farrer Eagle Coins/Praise Notes – Teacher Survey

Instructions: **Circle the number showing how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements, thinking about just the 2010-2011 school year.**

| | | | | |
|----------------------|----------|---------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Eagle Coins help students improve their classroom behavior. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Students like receiving Eagle Coins. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Eagle Coins help strengthen my relationships with students. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Parents like it when their child receives an Eagle Coin. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Students should be praised for appropriate classroom behavior. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Eagle Coins are an important way of communicating my expectations to students. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Eagle Coins are an important part of my communication with parents. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Students should receive at least one Eagle Coin a week. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Students would still like Eagle Coins if the school stopped doing prize drawings. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I like the Eagle Coin part of our school programming. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Eagle Coins take too much time. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. Tracking Eagle Coins is easy for me to manage. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. Eagle Coins should continue to be used next year. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Please write additional comments regarding things you particularly *liked* about the Eagle Coins below:

Please write additional comments regarding things you particularly *disliked* about the Eagle Coins below:

Appendix B: Parent Survey

Please circle your relation to the child:

Mother Father Other (specify) _____ Ethnicity _____

Your child's grade _____ # of years your child has attended Farrer Elementary _____

Circle the number showing how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Please answer for this school year only (2010 – 2011).

| | | | | |
|----------------------|----------|---------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Eagle Coins have helped my child improve his/her classroom behavior. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. My child likes getting Eagle Coins. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Eagle Coins have improved my relationship with my child's teacher. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. I am happy when my child gets Eagle Coins. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. My child received an adequate number of Eagle Coins this year. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Students should receive at least one Eagle Coin each week. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Eagle Coins help me talk to my child about school. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Eagle Coins are an important way that teachers communicate with me. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. It is important for me to know that my child is being praised at school. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I praise my child when he/she brings an Eagle Coin home. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. My child should be praised by his/her teacher for appropriate classroom behavior. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. My child would still like Eagle Coins if the school stopped doing prize drawings. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. Eagle Coins should continue to be used next year. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

What do you *like* about the Eagle Coins?

What do you *dislike* about the Eagle Coins?

Por favor, marque cual es su relación con el hijo:

Madre Padre Otro (especifique) _____ Etnicidad _____

Nivel de grado de su hijo _____

Número de años que lleva su hijo en Farrer Elementary _____

Circule el número que muestra que tan de acuerdo o en desacuerdo está con las siguientes oraciones. Por favor, llene esta encuesta acerca de este año solamente (2010 a 2011).

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Estoy Muy En Desacuerdo | Estoy de Desacuerdo | Neutrál No estoy seguro | Estoy de Acuerdo | Estoy Muy de Acuerdo |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Las “Eagle Coins” han ayudado a mejorar el comportamiento de mi hijo/a. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. A mi hijo/a le gusta recibir las “Eagle Coins.” | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Las “Eagle Coins” han ayudado a mejorar mi relación con el/la maestro/a de mi hijo/a. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Estoy contento/a cuando mi hijo/a recibe las “Eagle Coins.” | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Mi hijo/a recibió un número suficiente de “Eagle Coins” este año. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Los estudiantes deben recibir por lo menos una “Eagle Coin” cada semana. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Las “Eagle Coins” me ayudan a hablar con mi hijo/a de la escuela. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Las “Eagle Coins” son una manera importante para que los maestros se comuniquen conmigo. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Es importante que yo sepa que mi hijo/a esta siendo alabado/a. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. Yo felicito a mi hijo/a cuando él/ella trae un “Eagle Coin” a la casa. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Mi hijo/a debe ser alabado por su maestro/a por el comportamiento apropiado en clase. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. A mi hijo le gustarían las “Eagle Coins” si la escuela dejara de hacer sorteos de premios. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. Las “Eagle Coins” deben usarse el próximo año. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

¿Qué le gusta de las “Eagle Coins”?

¿Qué *no* le gusta de las “Eagle Coins”?

Appendix C: Student Survey

Student Name _____

Grade _____ Age _____ Ethnicity _____

Eagle Coins – Student Survey (3-6 grades)

Answer the following by circling the number that tells how you feel about the statement.

| | | | | |
|----------------------|----------|---------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral Not sure | Agree | Strongly agree |

Example:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| I am a great kid. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| I like chocolate ice cream. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Eagle Coins help me behave better in class. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. I like getting Eagle Coins. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Eagle Coins help me get along better with my teacher. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. My parents are happy when I bring Eagle Coins home. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Students should get Eagle Coins for doing good things in school. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. It is important to know what classroom behavior my teacher likes. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. I got enough Eagle Coins this year. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Eagle Coins help me talk to my parent(s) about school. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. I enjoy bringing Eagle Coins home to my parent(s). | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. I try to get Eagle Coins at school. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Eagle Coins help me know what I'm supposed to do in school. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. I would like Eagle Coins even if the school stopped giving prizes. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 13. I would like it if my new teacher gave out Eagle Coins next year. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

What do you *like* about the Eagle Coins?

What do you *dislike* about the Eagle Coins?

Student Name _____

Grade _____ Age _____ Ethnicity _____

Eagle Coins – Student Survey (K-2 grades)

Answer the following by circling the number that tells how you feel about the question or statement.



Example:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| I am a great kid. | | | | | |
| I like chocolate ice cream. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Eagle Coins help me behave better in class. | | | | | |
| 2. I like getting Eagle Coins. | | | | | |
| 3. Eagle Coins help me get along better with my teacher. | | | | | |
| 4. My parents are happy when I bring Eagle Coins home. | | | | | |
| 5. Students should get Eagle Coins for doing good things in school. | | | | | |
| 6. It is important to know what classroom behavior my teacher likes. | | | | | |
| 7. I got enough Eagle Coins this year. | | | | | |
| 8. Eagle Coins help me talk to my parent(s) about school. | | | | | |
| 9. I enjoy bringing Eagle Coins home to my parent(s). | | | | | |
| 10. I try to get Eagle Coins at school. | | | | | |
| 11. Eagle Coins help me know what I'm supposed to do in school. | | | | | |
| 12. I would like Eagle Coins even if the school stopped giving prizes. | | | | | |
| 13. I would like it if my new teacher gave out Eagle Coins next year. | | | | | |

What did you *like* about the Eagle Coins?What did you *dislike* about the Eagle Coins?

Grado: _____ Edad: _____ Sexo: _____ Etnicidad: _____

Eagle Coins – Encuesta de estudiantes (grados 3 a 6)

Circule el número que muestra que tan de acuerdo o en desacuerdo está con las siguientes oraciones.

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Estoy Muy En Desacuerdo | Estoy de Desacuerdo | Neutrál No estoy seguro | Estoy de Acuerdo | Estoy Muy de Acuerdo |

Por ejemplo:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Soy un/a estudiante bueno/a | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| Me gusta helado. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. Las “Eagle Coins” me ayudan a comportarme mejor en la clase. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Me gusta recibir las “Eagle Coins.” | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Las “Eagle Coins” ayudan a llevarme mejor con mi maestro/a. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Mis padres están contentos cuando yo traigo un “Eagle Coin” a la casa. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Los estudiantes deben recibir las “Eagle Coins” por hacer cosas buenas en la escuela. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Es importante que yo sepa qué tipo de comportamiento le gusta a mi maestro/a. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Recibí suficientes “Eagle Coins” este año. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Las “Eagle Coins” me ayudan a hablar con mis padres de la escuela. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. A mí me gusta traer las “Eagle Coins” a mis padres. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. Yo intento recibir las “Eagle Coins” en la escuela. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Las “Eagle Coins” me ayudan a saber lo que debo hacer en la escuela. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. Me gustaría que mi nuevo/a maestro/a diera las “Eagle Coins” el próximo año. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

¿Qué te gusta de las “Eagle Coins”?

¿Qué *no* te gusta de las “Eagle Coins”?

Grado: _____ Edad: _____ Sexo: _____ Etnicidad: _____

Eagle Coins – Encuesta de estudiantes (grados K a 2)

Circule el número que muestra que tan de acuerdo o en desacuerdo está con las siguientes oraciones.



Por ejemplo:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Soy un/a estudiante bueno/a | | | | | |
| Me gusta el helado. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Las “Eagle Coins” me ayudan a comportarme mejor en la clase. | | | | | |
| 2. Me gusta recibir las “Eagle Coins.” | | | | | |
| 3. Las “Eagle Coins” ayudan a llevarme mejor con mi maestro/a. | | | | | |
| 4. Mis padres están contentos cuando yo traigo un “Eagle Coin” a la casa. | | | | | |
| 5. Los estudiantes deben recibir las “Eagle Coins” por hacer cosas buenas en la escuela. | | | | | |
| 6. Es importante que yo sepa qué tipo de comportamiento le gusta a mi maestro/a. | | | | | |
| 7. Recibí suficientes “Eagle Coins” este año. | | | | | |
| 8. Las “Eagle Coins” me ayudan a hablar con mis padres de la escuela. | | | | | |
| 9. A mí me gusta traer las “Eagle Coins” a mis padres. | | | | | |
| 10. Yo intento recibir las “Eagle Coins” en la escuela. | | | | | |
| 11. Las “Eagle Coins” me ayudan a saber lo que debo hacer en la escuela. | | | | | |
| 12. Me gustaría que mi nuevo/a maestro/a diera las “Eagle Coins” el próximo año. | | | | | |

¿Qué te gusta de las “Eagle Coins”?

¿Qué *no* te gusta de las “Eagle Coins”?

Appendix D: Consent Forms

Consent to be a Research Subject

Introduction

This research is being conducted by Angela Howell, a graduate student at Brigham Young University. You have been chosen for this study because you are a teacher at Farrer Elementary School.

Procedure

You are being asked to complete a 13-item questionnaire and two open-ended questions about Eagle Coins. This should take approximately 5-10 minutes.

Risks/Discomforts

There are minimal risks for participation in this study.

Benefits

This study provides an opportunity for you to report your perceptions of Eagle Coins. The results of the surveys may be used by administration in an effort to improve the quality of the Eagle Coins.

Confidentiality

The survey will be anonymous. There will be no reference to personally identifiable information about you at any point in the research.

Compensation

You will not receive compensation for completing the questionnaire.

Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at anytime or refuse to participate entirely without jeopardy to your status or standing with the school or administration.

Questions about the Research

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Angela Howell at (801)362-3572; hangela@byu.edu or Paul Caldarella at (801) 422-4646; paul_caldarella@byu.edu.

Questions about your Rights as Research Participants

If you have questions that you do not feel comfortable asking the researcher, you may contact Dr. Lane Fischer, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, 340-L MCKB, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602; phone, (801) 422-8293. Email: lane_fischer@byu.edu

AGREE

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will to participate in this study. By agreeing to participate, I understand that I will be asked to complete a survey about Eagle Coins.

Printed name: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

OR

DISAGREE

I have read, understood, and received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will not to participate in this study. By choosing not to participate, I understand that I will not be asked to complete a survey about Eagle Coins.

Printed name: _____
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Implied Consent to Participate in Research

My name is Angela Howell, and I am a graduate student at Brigham Young University. I am inviting you to take part in the research because your child attends Farrer Elementary School. You and your child are invited to participate in this research study about Eagle Coins. Your child may have brought home Eagle Coins this year. Teachers write notes on Eagle Coins to tell students what they did well. Students can keep their Eagle Coins and take them home.

Your participation in this study will require completion of the attached surveys (one for you, and one for your child). This should take approximately 5-10 minutes per survey. Your participation will be anonymous and involves minimal risk to you and your child. You will not be paid for being in this study. However, after you or your child returns the surveys your child will receive a small thank you gift (pen, pencil, etc.).

You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to be. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to answer for any reason. We will be happy to answer any questions you have about this study. If you have further questions about this project or if you have a research-related problem, you may contact me, Angela Howell phone: (801) 362-3572, email: hangela@byu.edu; or my advisor, Paul Caldarella phone: (801) 422-4646, email: paul_caldarella@byu.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant you may contact Dr. Lane Fischer, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, 340-L MCKB, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602; phone, (801) 422-8293. Email: lane_fischer@byu.edu. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research participants.

The completion of this survey implies your consent to participate.

Please complete the attached surveys and return them to your child's teacher within 1 week of receiving them. Thank you.

Me llamo Anglea Howell y soy una estudiante de maestría de la Universidad de Brigham Young. Le invito a tomar parte en el estudio porque su hijo asiste a la Escuela de Farrer Elementary. Usted y su hijo están invitados a participar en este estudio de Eagle Coins. Tal vez su hijo haya traído a la casa Eagle Coins este año. Los maestros escriben notas sobre las Eagle Coins para decir a los estudiantes lo que hicieron bien. Los estudiantes pueden guardar sus Eagle Coins y llevárselas a la casa.

Su participación en este estudio requiere que usted complete las encuestas adjuntas. Una es para usted y la otra es para su hijo. Cada encuesta duraría aproximadamente de 5 a 10 minutos. Su participación será anónima e involucra un riesgo mínimo a usted y a su hijo. No se le pagará por su participación en el estudio. Pero, después que usted o su hijo entregue las encuestas, su hijo recibirá un regalito (por ejemplo un lápiz).

Usted no tiene que participar en este estudio si usted no quiere participar. Usted no tiene que contestar ninguna pregunta si no quiere contestar por alguna razón. Estamos dispuestos a contestar más preguntas sobre este proyecto. Si usted tiene más preguntas sobre este proyecto o si usted tiene una que tiene que ver con el estudio, me puede contactar.

Angela Howell teléfono: (801) 362-3572, email: hangel@byu.edu; o mi asesor, Paul Caldarella teléfono: (801) 422-4646, email: paul_caldarella@byu.edu.

Si usted tiene preguntas de sus derechos como participante del estudio usted puede contactar al Dr. Lane Fischer, Chair of the Institutional Review Board, 340-L MCKB, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602; teléfono, (801) 422-8293. Email: lane_fischer@byu.edu. El Institutional Review Board es un grupo de personas que revisan los estudios para proteger los derechos y el bienestar de los participantes del estudio.

El hecho de completar esta encuesta implica su consentimiento para participar.

Por favor complete las encuestas adjuntas y entréguelas al maestro de su hijo en una semana después de recibirlas. Gracias.

Appendix E: Teacher Open-Ended Responses

Teachers liked the form

- If I prewrite the behavior – it’s much quicker to fill out the name
- They are simple to fill out.
- I liked the triplicate form. Praise is such an essential part of behavior management.
- These Eagle Coins are easier to fill out than the other ones we had. Parents are happy to get positive info about their child’s behavior.

Appropriate behavior is reinforced

- A way to show the class who was modeling appropriate behavior. A little extra incentive.
- Great way to reward good behavior.
- I liked that they’re specific and give the student a behavioral boost.
- Students do perform to get an Eagle Coin
- Created positive environment
- Makes students aware of their behavioral expectations.
- It helps the whole school focus on positive student behavior.

Eagle Coins provide data on behavior

- Give me data of students, so I can do drawings in class.
- They are a way of tracking praise given and insuring good relationships.

Students like Eagle Coins

- Students are excited about them.
- My students love the Eagle Coins.
- It helps the whole school focus on positive student behavior. Students love them!

What do you DISLIKE about the Eagle Coins?

Eagle Coins are losing effectiveness

- After a couple weeks of giving an increase of coins, I feel like they completely lost their effectiveness. My students don’t care about them as much.
- I think that the Eagle Coins being our focal behavioral strategy diminished the students enthusiasm. Seems like we are focused on quantity rather than quality.
- Students are getting bored – these are losing their effectiveness.

Eagle Coins take time

- Time – K students need recognition close to event - in order to make excellent connection – often can’t stop to write them. Some Spanish parents can’t understand.
- They take long to fill out – sometimes I tell them “I owe you” and get it to them the next day because I’m too busy or don’t want to interrupt class to fill one out.

- Takes a little time. I need to wait until students are busy doing some work and I wish I can give these right after the good behavior happened.
- Time to record them. Keeping track of them
- The time it takes to write during class time can be challenging. Sometimes while writing you lose the attention of the other students.

Students want Eagle Coins for the wrong reasons

- Sometimes the only reason kids are good is for the eagle coin.
- Students often expect to be recognized for behavior that is expected (being respectful)

Teachers dislike the procedure

- It is cumbersome to fill out a form in triplicate to praise a student.
- The carbon copies don't always copy through. You have to press extremely hard.
- I need to get into the habit of carrying them with me.
- The time it takes to write during class time can be challenging. Sometimes while writing you lose the attention of the other students.

Other

- I don't have any idea how parents feel about them – or if they ever get home.

Appendix F: Parent Open-Ended Responses

Creates positive feelings in child (self-esteem, pride, happiness, etc)

- It helps build self-esteem and reinforce his good behavior. My son had a great sense of pride and hung them up in his bedroom.
- They give my child a sense of confidence within himself he really enjoys. He is so more happier the day he does good.
- My daughter was very proud of herself when she got eagle coins.
- My child enjoys receiving them and is always proud of herself for achieving one.
- “That they make them happy.”
- “My daughter gets happy when she receives an Eagle Coin.”
- “When my daughter wins an Eagle Coin and she is pleased that she won one.”
- They gave my child a huge amount of self-confidence that he was lacking. He is so happy when he gets them and loves the praises he gets at home for sure.
- Students feel proud of themselves. Student s like to be recognized individually.
- Because my son its hapy and he want the prize trade. Thanks for help me with my son relation in the school. Good job Farrer.
- “I like that my daughter feels good; like that they make her feel important.”
- “To see the face of hapiness in my daughter, the satisfaction of knowing that she is doing good things.”
- “They feel happy and accomplish putting forth more effort.”
- “Everytime they give one to my daughter, she comes home very content.”
- They are the best this the school could have none for the childes self cofadents. I strong beleave they are needed. My child come home happy and please with her self.
- Kids get happy when they receive them. They want to work harder to get them.
- Make him happy
- “I like it a lot because my daughter always arrives very pleased because day after day she receives two or three Eagle Coins. Thanks.”
- Students feel proud of themselves. Students like to be recognized individually.
- “My son returns very happy every time he receives one and also because it helps the children to become better human beings.”
- He felt pride when he brought them home to post on refrigerator
- It makes my girl feel so special and she wants to keep on behavior good to get some more Eagle Coins.
- They help a child feel good about his/herself. They’re great motivation and gives everyone something to brag about.
- It is great to encourage self-confidence...makes kids feel important and respected
- “My son gets very happy and I do too.”
- My child is happy every time she gets one.
- “That my child gets happy.”
- “They feel praised and the force themselves more.”
- “They make my daughter happy.”

Appropriate behavior is reinforced

- It helps build self-esteem and reinforce his good behavior. My son had a great sense of pride and hung them up in his bedroom.
- My son enjoys getting them. It shows him that his good behavior is recognized.
- I like what my child is being praised for. It lets me know her teacher picks out the same good behaviors I see in her that are treasured.
- The positive reinforcement for good behavior.
- I like that they focus on the good the students are doing and letting the student know their good behavior is noticed.
- I actually knew that my child behaved in class and was recognized for it.
- “That they give them to the children when do a good deed and above all because they help them behave better.”
- I love the recognition that comes when a child has done something positive. Such a great way to draw focus away from “praising”/acknowledging negative behavior.
- Gives kids recognition for good behavior.
- Rewarding good behavior.
- When I read the notes on them it makes me happy to see that the staff recognizes my daughters effort and that she is a good and wonderful kid!
- Students feel proud of themselves. Students like to be recognized individually.
- They are rewards for specific behaviors
- My child gets rewarded for good behavior.
- They are a wonderful way to praise and acknowledge good, great, and appropriate behavior.
- I like that they provide a physical reminder to the child that they did something good. The positive feedback is reinforced several times 1) when noticed 2) when take note to the office 3) when take note home 4) each time note is read.
- Praising the children for good behavior.
- I like that the well-behaved students are getting recognized for good behavior.
- Positive reinforcement
- It gives the child instant recognition.
- Students feel proud of themselves. Students like to be recognized individually.
- I get to reward my kids for good behavior.
- A wonderful way to praise and acknowledge good behavior and to keep parents in the loop.
- A wonderful way to praise appropriate behavior and to help parents know/communicate the happenings of a school day.
- It helps students realize that they are being noticed when they do good things, kind of like giving them incentive to keep it up.
- The instant praise/recognition the child receives.
- “I like the Eagle Coins because the children feel that the are doing good and they like to bring them home.”
- I like things that reward kids.
- Rewarding positive behavior is SO much better and effective than only concentrating on negative behavior.
- “That they give them to good children.”

- I like that they make her feel an incentive to behave well. They are a great topic for discussion about school. She thrives on physical demonstrations of appreciation (being given things) so this has been very good for her.
- Inspires my daughter to be excited and feel important she's being noticed by her teacher.
- Very insensitive
- "The students force themselves to good things so that they can win Eagle Coins and better their behavior."
- "They motivate the children to better their behavior and try to better their studies and it's a way to motivate them."
- "I like that they help my daughter force herself more in school."
- "I like them because they motivate children to behave better and be more disciplined and to follow so that they can learn more and pay more attention in class."
- "I like that the children receive them to motivate them to stay in school."
- "They motivate the children to do their things better because they will win a prize if they do it well."
- "They motivate them more to study."
- They give immediate praise to the child, which rewards the good behavior the teacher has witnessed. This encourages the child to do better.
- "I like that they give them the Eagle Coins because they serve as an incentive for the children to put more focus on school."
- "They entice my son to behave in a better way, they permit that the relationship with the teacher to be better, and that they already know the rules and goals of the class."
- "They feel happy and accomplish putting forth more effort."
- "They entice to students to be better."
- "They are great to motivate children to continue with school."
- Gives good incentive to kids to behave.
- Kids get happy when they receive them. They want to work harder to get them.
- Is good idea for help kids behave better in class and school
- They make my child excited about school, are an incentive to do good
- "I like Eagle Coins because I that my son will win one with his effort."
- "It motivates them to force themselves more in school with both behavior and studying."
- "It helps my daughter to behave in the best way in class."
- That kids get more excited about school when they get praised.
- It makes my daughter want to do good things and gives her something to look forward to.
- "They help them improve their behavior in school."
- "motivation."
- "It gives motivation to the students."
- "That they are being motivated this way."
- "They motivate my children to keep studying so that they can receive Eagle Coins. Also. I like them because they behave better with the teachers and their classmates."
- "My son returns very happy every time he receives one and also because it helps the children to become better human beings."
- "My son puts forth more effort to behave better and that is very good for him."
- "They entice the students to be better."

- Its good for children to work towards a goal.
- It makes my girl feel so special and she wants to keep on behavior good to get some more Eagle Coins.
- It helps kids want to do better in school.
- They help a child feel good about his/herself. They're great motivation and gives everyone something to brag about.
- It helps kids do better
- They help my child do what they're supposed to do.
- Helps me to know that our children are doing well and improving their work at school.
- "I like that the children have motivation to behave better in school and be more disciplined and that they have to behave the best they can."
- Helps students work hard
- It gave the kids something to work toward
- It means that they work hard to earn it. They do better at school and classroom.
- "They feel praised and the force themselves more."
- "They motivate my children to keep studying, behave well in class and with the teachers."
- "They motivate them to try."
- "Encourages my daughter to do things better."

Knowledge about child's behavior at school

- Because that way I know if my child is behaving good.
- I like what my child is being praised for. It lets me know her teacher picks out the same good behaviors I see in her that are treasured.
- I like that we got specific information on what our children are doing well in and that the feedback came directly from the teacher.
- I actually knew that my child behaved in class and was recognized for it.
- "To know the behavior of my child."
- "I know when my child does something good in school."
- "To see the face of happiness in my daughter, the satisfaction of knowing that she is doing good things."
- Tells you how your child is doing in class.
- "I like that daughter brings me home Eagle Coins because I can know her behavior."
- Its important to see that my child is being praised for good behavior at school.

Improves parent-child communication

- I like that they make her feel an incentive to behave well. They are a great topic for discussion about school. She thrives on physical demonstrations of appreciation (being given things) so this has been very good for her.
- They gave my child a huge amount of self-confidence that he was lacking. He is so happy when he gets them and loves the praises he gets at home for sure.
- My kids are excited about getting them and about explaining to us why they got them.
- It sure helps my child and me understand each other more.
- I get to reward my kids for good behavior.

- A wonderful way to praise and acknowledge good behavior and to keep parents in the loop.
- A wonderful way to praise appropriate behavior and to help parents know/communicate the happenings of a school day.
- Make me proud of my grandson
- “My son gets very happy and I do too.”
- I talk to my kid more.
- “They help me to stay in communication with the teacher and my child.”

Child shares Eagle Coins at home

- It helps build self-esteem and reinforce his good behavior. My son had a great sense of pride and hung them up in his bedroom.
- He felt pride when he brought them home to post on refrigerator
- “I like the Eagle Coins because the children feel that they are doing good and they like to bring them home.” I like that they provide a physical reminder to the child that they did something good. The positive feedback is reinforced several times 1) when noticed 2) when take note to the office 3) when take note home 4) each time note is read.

Child receives prizes

- “They motivate the children to do their things better because they will win a prize if they do it well.” Because my son is happy and he wants the prize trade. Thanks for help me with my son relation in the school. Good job Farrer.
- I think it’s a way for the kids to get things.
- I like about Eagle Coins we sometimes do drawings.
- I like things that reward kids.
- “What I like about the Eagle Coins is that the children of Farrer can win good prizes.”

Other

- I think it is a great way to let the kids know they are being watched.
- I like that they make her feel an incentive to behave well. They are a great topic for discussion about school. She thrives on physical demonstrations of appreciation (being given things) so this has been very good for her.
- I think it is a great way to let the kids know they are being watched.
- They are special to me.
- “They entice my son to behave in a better way, they permit that the relationship with the teacher to be better, and that they already know the rules and goals of the class.”
- ALL – 1
- “They help my daughter.”
- “I like everything.”
- “That they keep giving them next year.”
- “It’s all good.”
- “I am very pleased with them.”
- Because they have an eagle on the front.
- Behavior of my children.
- “They continue to help children.”

- All, more information the progress
- I think they are great
- In my case, they don't help much because she has good behavior already
- "Everything."
- My younger children get more excited about this program. I think it is great.
- "I don't know."
- "That they were designed for behavior."
- "My child learned more."
- "To be able to study more."

Neutral/positive responses (on dislike question)

- Nothing, we love the idea!
- Nothing really.
- Nothing. I think they are a wonderful tool.
- "The truth is that I don't have anything that I don't like about the Eagle Coins. For they are good for all that they do to motivate the children and make good students."
- "I like everything about the Eagle Coins."
- "They motivate the children and the parents a lot to study together to receive better results."
- "Its good."
- Nothing really, he would like to get more but I told him he needs to earn them if he would like more. He says O boy is going to try. P.S. my wife and I love this program. ☺
- "Everything is good."
- Nothing I do feel the prizes do help too!
- "I can't say that I don't like anything because for me its very interesting..."
- "I like everything."
- "I like everything."
- "Nothing were to exist because thanks to those Eagle Coins the children improve their conduct and discipline."
- I don't dislike anything about eagle coins. We think it's a wonderful way to help children in school to improve better. ☺
- "Everything looks good to me."
- "The truth is that I don't have anything to say because I don't like them. On the contrary, they children are happy for the Eagle Coins because for them they are prizes."
- "I like everything."
- "I agree with the Eagle Coins."

Prize distribution methods should be changed

- The prize drawing might be done with different prizes. Prizes should reflect what they are for. I do not associate hamburgers with good classroom behavior.
- When the school stepped up weekly Eagle Coins it seemed like the reasons specified on the coins were pretty generic. Kids know when they have done something really well as opposed to just being given coins for subpar blanket behavior. It became diluted sort of. Also I feel like so many of the new Eagle Coin rewards were food based i.e. Burger King coupons, etc. I also think the weekly drawings don't "reward" enough of the % of eagle

coins dropped in the jar. Our kids love the Eagle Coins but I would love to see them be able to redeem them for “trinkets” of some sort instead of treats/food. Maybe a school store? Or prize bucket to choose out of?

- My child brings home eagle coins daily, but not many “prizes.” Maybe prizes for accumulated amounts would be better.
- “They only give them a paper. I would like it if they were to give prizes to motivate them more and to keep studying.”
- “That they only give the a paper and not any prizes.”
- “She never got a prize.”

Parent wants more information about Eagle Coins

- I didn’t know what she did. It said certain listen, or did work but I would like to know more. Also to hear if my child is listening or needs help, to speak with her so she can be more well-behaved. So a praise or a needs to work on because there’s no time to talk with teachers. I would like to be informed the same day if possible.
- It’s not much of a dislike, but not sure what the children do with them once they’ve receive them. For example, I have seen a few Eagle Coins when they come home, but are they supposed to turn their copy in? What do the children do with them?
- I don’t always see them. What are they supposed to do with their copies they receive?
- I didn’t know the kids could bring them home – it would have been nice to see them and get feedback that way.
- It’s hard to see the good things all the time. Don’t want my child to think they need praise or a prize to do a good thing.

Eagle Coins are distributed inconsistently (7 responses, 17.5 %)

- While understanding that the teacher can’t always watch every child, they will recognize one child for good behavior when four or five others were doing the same behavior. Giving out Eagle Coins has been inconsistent and random.
- “My daughter gets sad because says that she didn’t win any Eagle Coins and that she was behaving well.”
- The teachers need to give out more eagle coins to students when they do good schoolwork or they are behaving.
- Sometimes the same kids get them over and over and win more prizes.
- My child feels like he doesn’t receive as many eagle coins as he deserves.
- Teacher doesn’t recognize the good kids all the time when they are doing good work
- That they don’t give them out to everyone being good

Child receives Eagle Coins for wrong reasons

- When the school stepped up weekly Eagle Coins it seemed like the reasons specified on the coins were pretty generic. Kids know when they have done something really well as opposed to just being given coins for sub-par blanket behavior. It became diluted sort of. Also I feel like so many of the new Eagle Coin rewards were food based i.e. Burger King coupons, etc. I also think the weekly drawings don’t “reward” enough of the % of eagle coins dropped in the jar. Our kids love the Eagle Coins but I would love to see them be

able to redeem them for “trinkets” of some sort instead of treats/food. Maybe a school store? Or prize bucket to choose out of?

- “That they don’t give more than two at a time because in the case of my daughter she felt pleased and happy and said that she would put more effort in class and she bettered her behavior.” (Eagle Coins should be given only when they’re really good)
- “Worry: I hope that it’s a positive incentive and that it doesn’t become just a way to win a prize.”
- “If my child were not to learn.”
- I don’t really like the “quota” but I understand that I may help the teachers focus on good behavior/actions from all students, not just the “regulars.”
- I don’t think there should be a “quota” of coins per student. A few students who are constantly disrupting class really don’t deserve them.
- “That they don’t give so many at one time. [Eagle Coins should be more special]”

Child should receive more Eagle Coins

- One child of 24 kids got a eagle coin a week. My child got two eagles this year.
- They should give out more of them.
- The teachers need to give out more eagle coins to students when they do good school work or they are behaving.
- My child almost never receives them contributing to a low self-esteem
- Sometimes would like to see more of them.
- My child feels like he doesn’t receive as many eagle coins as he deserves.
- Give more of them more often.
- they don’t get enough at school.

Other

- Nothing, I think it’s an excellent program! Oh wait, maybe change the name since it’s no longer a “coin” like “Eagle Card” or “Puma Pass” (new school mascot! ☺)
- “That they cease to exist.”
- Nothing, I do have an idea that would help booster a child’s self-esteem – maybe you can pass it along. Have parents collect the eagle coins in a jar “eagle coin jar” and read them to your child at least 1/week. Specially when they have a hard day and feel bad.
- It’s another job for the teacher –she seems to be having a hard enough time with her normal responsibilities
- When they get wet they rip
- They rip
- I think it takes away from the class there are more important things the kids could be doing.
- Sometimes competition
- I don’t know for sure how effective they would be for her as she gets older. Maybe modified versions of tokens of appreciation according to age might be good.
- I dislike about because people maybe don’t like it.

Appendix G: Student Open-Ended Responses

Child receives prizes

- Because I like them, and prizes.
- I get prizes.
- I like eagle coins cause we could get a prize
- They get me surprises.
- “I win prizes by doing soemthing good in school.”
- “Because I will get prizes if I behave well.”
- Made me feel good about myself. Made my mom and dad happy with me, and yes I liked the prizes as well. ☺
- Because we get a prize from Mr. Judd jar
- If I get a lot I can get a prize.
- Because I get prizes.
- I sometimes get prizes.
- The prizes.
- I could get prizes.
- I get prizes.
- Because I win lots of prizes from Mr. Judd.
- We get prizes and praises (tell us that we did good)
- “They give us prizes and I feel like I have behaved well.”
- They push and motivate my son, its fine my son he like because he trade prize.
- When you get Eagle Coins you get prizes.
- They help me get prizes and be nice
- You get to take them to the office.
- I get prizes.
- You get prizes.
- You get prizes.
- The I get medals
- Because you get a prize
- “I can win prizes.”
- “I like it when my teacher gives me one and I trade it in the office.”
- “They give prizes.”
- “I like that they give me them so that I can know how to behave.”
- “I like them because it’s a prize for me.”
- “I can win gifts.”
- That we get a prize.
- The prizes.
- I get prizes for being good.
- The prizes.
- I like that when I get them there are drawings.
- They give you prizes.
- I like them because then we get excited more and they give you prizes sometimes.

- I like eagle coins because you get cool stuff.
- I like that you can get prizes and I like being good I do not like getting in trouble.
- If I get them I can win prizes.
- You get prizes.
- I get prizes.
- You can get laptops and show you are doing good in school.
- The thing I like about Eagle Coins is that you win good prizes.
- You get stuff for being good.
- That you get prizes.
- Get free coupon from the principal.

Appropriate behavior is reinforced

- They help me follow the rules.
- That they make me nicer.
- They help me behave to be good in school to pay a tamChem.
- It help me behave at school.
- They help you do nice things
- They help me do good things
- Because they have a eagle on front and it helps me in class.
- "I like that they motivate the children."
- They push and motivate my son, its fine my son he like because he trade prize.
- They helped me be good in school.
- They help me get prizes and be nice
- They make you do good things
- Because they help me behave better in school.
- "They motivate the children to always keep learning more."
- They get to be good and get prizes.
- They help my child do what they're supposed to do.
- Encourages good behavior.
- They helped other kids behave.
- That it helps us be better people.
- They make you do good things.
- "That my children force themselves more to win Eagle Coins."
- Because I do good things
- "I win prizes by doing something good in school."
- We get prizes and praises (tell us that we did good)
- They give us prizes and I feel like I have behaved well."
- Being rewarded for doing good things.
- They let me know that I did good things.
- It helps the students know that they're being good.
- I like to get Eagle Coins because I know I get good grades
- When you get eagle coins you are really good.
- That they are given for a reward for behavior.
- They show about behavior about kids.

- “If you behave well, you will receive Eagle Coins.”
- That they make me think that I am doing good in school.
- It makes me excited and lets me be aware of how I’m doing in school.
- I like getting noticed for doing good.
- They show that you are being good or doing what you’re supposed to do.
- That you get it when you do something right.
- You get it for being nice.
- You can get laptops and show you are doing good in school.
- You get stuff for being good.
- You realize what you did good.

Child is aware of school expectations (8 responses – 6%)

- “I love behaving well. The Eagle coin tells me what I should do.”
- You have to be responsible, respectful, and safe.
- “I like that they give me them so that I can know how to behave.”
- They help me know what I’m supposed to do.
- I like because help what behave to do.
- They help my child do what they’re supposed to do.
- They show that you are being good or doing what you’re supposed to do.
- It shows you have to do better choices and how to behave.

Creates positive feelings in child

- I like them because they make me feel happy.
- Like them
- Because I like them, and prizes
- It makes me happy.
- Basically everything, my child being happy and confident, and being proud of him and seeing how proud his mother and I both are of him.
- “My child is very pleased when he wins Eagle Coins.”
- Made me feel good about myself. Made my mom and dad happy with me, and yes I liked the prizes as well. ☺
- They are fun
- “My daughter is happy when she brings one home.”
- “I am happy.”
- They make me feel happy.
- They can make you feel good.
- I like them because then we get excited more and they give you prizes sometimes.
- “My son is very pleased when he receives them and it makes me happy that he tries to win them.”
- I like that when you get an eagle coin it makes you feel proud. That is what I like about eagle coins.
- It makes me feel good.
- Makes me feel proud about myself.
- They make me feel good.

- It makes me excited and lets me be aware of how I'm doing in school.
- They make me feel smart and happy.
- They're fun to have.

Improves parent-child communication

- "I congratulate him."
- "I like the Eagle Coins. My parents know when I behave well."
- What I like about it is my mom and dad are happy
- "They help me share with my parents that I do well in my classes."

Child likes the form/procedure

- I like the Eagle
- Because they have a eagle on front and it helps me in class.
- I like how there's a copy for everyone.
- I like about Eagle Coins that it has go thing on. And that when you write on it gose pass it.
- You can take a copy home.
- That I bring home Eagle Coins

Other

- I like everything.
- "I like everything about the Eagle Coins."
- Everything.
- They are cool.
- They are awesome.
- Not much.
- "The behavior of the students."
- I like to say quietlyI like to be nice other people
- "Getting Eagle Coins."
- I like it because my class gets eagle coins.
- I like that you can get prizes and I like being good I do not like getting in trodle.
- That you get praised for getting eagle coins.
- They praise us.
- Because I do good things

Child should receive more Eagle Coins

- I wanted more eagle coins
- I am sad when I don't get eagle coins.
- "My daughter gets sad when she doesn't win an Eagle Coin."
- "Not getting Eagle Coins."
- Nothing, besides I wish I received more.
- I don't get enough.
- They need to give more to the 6th graders
- Hardly got any.

- “ I don’t get a lot.”
- That they are hardly ever given out.
- They don’t get handed out as much.

Child does not receive Eagle Coins when deserved (10 responses – 20%)

- Some people get a whole lot and I don’t get very many even though I try to behave.
- What I don’t like about the Eagle Coins is that they don’t give them to us when we do good things and that doesn’t seem cool to me.”
- Sometimes you do better being quiet and they don’t notice.
- That they are not always given away with good behavior. Also they are given away easily and some very hard.
- That some kids who are really good rarely get Eagle Coins.
- Sometimes I don’t get Eagle Coins even if I’m being good.
- That not a lot of teachers give them out to me even though I do good stuff.
- That some kids who are really good rarely get Eagle Coins.
- You don’t always get picked.
- That not a lot of teachers give them out to me even though I do good stuff.

Child wants more prizes

- I don’t like when I get eagle coins and not a prize
- I don’t get pulled out of the jar.
- I do not get prizes
- “ When I don’t get an Eagle Coin, I don’t get a surprise.”
- “I don’t like them because I never receive anything.”
- Other people get prizes and I don’t.
- You do not get a prize or felling.
- When your name doesn’t get drawn from the jar
- They one give you eagle coins and only get a pencil, coupon to something else.
- You never get my name drawn out.
- How they don’t give everybody a prize.

Higher grades receive less Eagle Coins.

- I don’t like how they aren’t given to higher grades as much as lower grades.
- They need to give more to the 6th graders
- The little grades get eagle coins more than the big grades.
- That they are hardly ever given out.
- They don’t get handed out as much.

Child does not like the form/procedure

- Because they rip easily
- What I dislike about it is it is not real coins.
- I get mixed up with all the papers that come with it.
- When you wet it will rip
- They are just paper.

- What's the point?
- "When they put them in the raffle."
- That you have to work hard to get one.

Neutral/Positive Feelings (on the dislike question)

- I love "Eagle coins."
- "I don't know."
- "There isn't anything."
- "Nothing."
- Nothing, I rely like Eagle Coins.
- "There isn't any problem."
- "Everything is good."
- "No comments. Everything is good."
- "I like everything."
- "I like everthing."
- It's perfect.
- Nothing because I love them.

Other

- When I get them
- When I got in trouble and taken home to my mom.
- Others steal away my eagle coins
- She stated, "I don't know" and shrugged her shoulders.
- I don't like that my classmates just want them for prizes.
- What I dislike about eagle coins is that sometimes teachers give them for the wrong reason. That is what I dislike about eagle coins. Example: When a kid picks up a piece of trash and a teacher gives them an eagle coin. The kid was supposed to do that without a reward. That is what I mean.
- That they would not do good things.