

Our Lady of Mercy School

2nd Step Newsletter #1

Our Lady of Mercy wants your child to be as successful both at school and across a variety of environments. Success in school is not just about the academics. It is also about knowing how to reflect on your learning and how to get along with others.

Last year our staff worked diligently on Communicating Student Learning to Parents and we continue to work on this goal. Before that, the school implemented a program called Positive Behavior Support.

Below is a reminder of this program.

The purpose of school-wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is to establish a climate in which expected behavior is clear and predictable for all students. The behavior matrix of expected behaviors that addresses the three core values of *Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe* and examples of what that behavior should look like in the various areas can be found on the Policies page of our school website.

PBS includes strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting expected student behaviors to create a positive school environment. Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, we have created a continuum of support for all students within our school. This includes support in both classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, restrooms, playground, etc.).

This year, our staff has been trained in Second Step and classes have just begun the program.

The Second Step program is classroom-based program designed to increase students' success and decrease problem behaviors by promoting social-emotional competence and self-regulation.

It teaches skills that strengthen students' ability to learn, have empathy, manage emotions, and solve problems.

The Second Step program teaches skills in the following four areas:

1. **Skills for Learning:** Students gain skills to help themselves learn, including how to focus their attention, listen carefully, use self-talk to stay on task, and ask for help when needed.
2. **Empathy:** Students learn to identify and understand their own and others' feelings. Students also learn how to take another's perspective and how to show compassion.
3. **Emotion Management:** Students learn specific skills for calming down when experiencing strong feelings, such as anxiety or anger.
4. **Problem Solving:** Students learn a process for solving problems with others in a positive way.

Throughout the year, your child will be bringing home **Home Links** that are fun activities for you and your child to complete together. They are a great way for you to understand what your child is learning and for your child to show you what he or she knows.