Big Idea/Topic
Behavior Specific Praise

Georgia Standards of Excellence Alignment
Health Standard 7: Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.

Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) Alignment
Standard 7 – Positive Learning Environment: The teacher provides a well-managed, safe, and orderly environment that is conducive to learning and encourages respect for all.
Standard 10 - Communication: The teacher communicates effectively with students, parents or guardians, district and school personnel, and other stakeholders in ways that enhance student learning.

Instructional Design
Define Simply
Behavior specific praise is a statement of praise given to a student or group of students demonstrating classroom expected behaviors. It is a very simple and feasible tool that can help to promote successful student behaviors in the classroom. When teachers find ways to provide positive attention to students demonstrating expected behaviors, the expected behaviors will increase and become more routine throughout the classroom. Examples include:
- “Ginger, you are really trying your best. Thank you! You are being an active participant.”
- “Keith, you listened the first time. Great job! That is very respectful.”
- “Great job completing your work, Rajni! You are being responsible.”

Model/Demonstrate with Strategies
Behavior specific praise helps to inform students of successful classroom behaviors and gives attention to the expected behaviors. There are 4 steps to using behavior specific praise. 1) Identify the student or group by name; 2) Include a term of praise; 3) Describe or acknowledge the specific behavior being recognized; 4) Link to the school wide behavior expectations.

Georgia Department of Education
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Examples of strategies for using behavior specific praise include:
- Whole class compliment: “Let’s give Bailey a big hand for doing such a good job. He is showing accountability.”
- Calling on a student: “I like how Gabby is ready to listen. She is demonstrating respect.”

Non examples –
- “Brian is sitting in his seat.” Or saying, “Good job!” without connecting to the school wide expectations.
- Giving a token without saying anything.
- Only acknowledging for above and beyond behavior.

For more information and video examples visit:
The Classroom Checkup
The Iris Center
Video Example

Practice in All Relevant Settings
Behavior specific praise is most effective when delivered more frequently than corrective statements. A 5:1 ratio of positive feedback to corrective feedback is recommended. For students who have experienced trauma, it is recommended to deliver a 14:1 ratio of positive to corrective feedback. Tips for implementation:
- Deliver behavior specific praise immediately following a desired behavior or as soon after as possible.
- Deliver praise using a sincere tone of voice.
- Teachers can self-monitor their use of praise by keeping a tally of praise statements to reprimands during a class period. Classroom Data Collection Tool

Monitor & Provide Positive Feedback and Reinforcement
Teachers will positively acknowledge appropriate behavior. Behavior specific praise will let students know specifically what they did correctly and give them positive attention. Teachers can also utilize their school wide acknowledgement system (tokens, tickets, points) to reinforce the expected behavior. To be effective, praise must be age and developmentally appropriate. Elementary school students may respond to enthusiastic praise that occurs in front of the entire class, while middle or high school students may prefer subtle praise statements.

Based on Data, Adjust Instruction & Reteach
Teachers should consistently monitor their ratio of positive to corrective feedback. Classroom Data Collection Tool Behavior expectations may need to be retaught and practiced when there is an increase in disruptive behaviors or office referrals, or at the teacher’s discretion.
### Evidence of Student Success

- Desirable behaviors will increase while negative, undesirable behaviors should decrease with the use of behavior specific praise. 80% or more of students should meet the desired behavior without any additional verbal or nonverbal prompting from the teacher.

### Student Learning Supports

- This is a universal lesson plan and an effective practice used for struggling students in the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process.
- For some students, verbal praise in front of others may be considered aversive or even stigmatizing. To meet the needs of these students, teachers can provide praise in a one-on-one setting or in a nonverbal manner (i.e., through a note.) [Video Example](#)

### Engaging Families

- Families can have access to the classroom behavior matrix and set a goal of creating a 5:1 ratio of positive to corrective statements in the home setting.
- Families can create a matrix for home.