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## **Positive Teaching at Charlotte Upper Elementary**

Charlotte Upper Elementary has been very excited to start several programs designed to help students be successful socially, and help them take control of their emotions. Programs like Second Step, PBIS, Michigan Model for Health, and speakers like Basketball Jones and the Kindness Campaign all focus on helping students get along and feel good about themselves.

This school year Caroline Wiersma, the student support specialist at Charlotte Upper Elementary, along with Fred Koning, the dean of students, have spearheaded efforts to reinforce positive behavior. Students earn Oriole Pride tickets by following expectations laid out in a matrix and regularly taught by teachers. Students can earn classroom prizes with the tickets. Weekly prizes include things like getting Mr. Koning's chair for a day, or even school wide prizes like the opportunity to play on a giant slip and slide at the end of the year.

In addition to reinforcing positive behavior all teachers promote positive self-talk and help students learn how to overcome conflict with peers through weekly lessons done during Oriole Pride time. These lessons are taken from Second Step a national program that already supports over 14 million students.

On top of this Health teacher, Joanna Schultz, promotes healthy living through the Michigan Model for Health. Combined with the efforts of our PE teacher, Stephen Combs, who has been a huge advocate for healthy movement, students at the Upper Elementary are learning more than just math and reading. They are learning how to interact with one another and live healthy lives.

Success in our students' future endeavors requires more than just knowledge, it requires the ability to get along with one another. Students are regularly exposed to the definition of bullying and provided with strategies to handle bullies or even just people who are being mean. The Kindness Campaign visited Charlotte Upper Elementary on April 12, to help 6th grade girls understand how hurtful words can be and to build a positive culture. On April 18, this same message will be brought to all students at the Upper Elementary as Basketball Jones visits the Charlotte Performing Arts Center.

The Upper Elementary has begun many different initiatives this school year to support students socially and emotionally. The results have been happier, stronger students more ready to tackle the stresses of school and the world around them.