Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals

Star of Innovation Award Application Form

School Name **Albert Lea High School**   Grade Levels **8-12**

Name of School District **Albert Lea Area Schools**

Name of Principal **Chris Dibble, Sean Gaston (AP), Kristi Kenis (AP)**

Application Submitted By **Chris Dibble, Sean Gaston, Kristi Kenis**

School Street Address **2000 Tiger Lane**

City, Zip **Albert Lea, MN 56007**

Telephone Number **507-379-5341**

MASSP Division **Southeast**

Name of Program **Operation "Be On Time"**

Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet/s of paper.

- Description of the program.
- How has it impacted your school?
- What difficulties did you encounter in its implementation?
- What issue/s might another school encounter in replicating this program?
- Do you have any data to show the impact of this program? If so, please share it with us.

Applications must be submitted to MASSP offices by March 1.

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MASSP • 2 Pine Tree Drive • Suite 380 • Arden Hills, MN 55112

Questions? Please contact:
Bob Driver, Executive Director
612-361-6159

Description:
Following Quarter 1 of the 2022-2023 school year, the administrative team at Albert Lea High School knew something had to be done about the hallways and number of students who were consistently late to and skipping classes. As a team, we put together an approach to help students arrive to classes on time and make the hallways and bathrooms a safer place for students.

The first step in the process was to find a way to indicate to students how much time they had to get to classes during the 4-minute passing time. For quarter 2, we played music over the intercom system for the final minute of each passing time. This assisted students in being able to monitor when they needed to begin moving to classes. The initial result was an automatic increase in the number of students attending class. There were of course still numerous students who were apathetic about attending class, but we were able to separate the chronically late from the students who truly didn't gauge the passing period time frame well.

Based on teacher feedback, we soon switched the music to playing for the first three minutes of the passing time and turning off for the final minute. The music has added some ambiance to the hallways and students and staff like the variety of music that is played. At this time, the music is chosen by students who are nominated for a "Pawsitive" award by a staff member. Each student who receives an award gets to pick three songs that will be played the following month.

The second step in the process was a series of Hall Sweeps that were performed following the final bell of a passing period. Staff were given a heads up as to when the Sweeps would take place, and all doors would be locked at the bell. Any students remaining in the hallways were herded into a classroom where they signed in and were asked about why they were late and how we as a staff could assist them to get to class on time. The first time was basically a warning. The second time, parents were called and both student and parent were given a warning about spending the following day in the office where work would be brought to them as opposed to having the opportunity to walk from class to class. The third time, the student received one day in an "Alternate Instructional Room (AIR)" where all work was brought to them by staff.

For the entire 2022-2023 school year, we kept AIR up and running for our students who found it difficult to attend classes. It gave them a chance to catch up on work and be in a place where they did not disturb other students. AIR has gone away for 2023-2024 as students have been better at attending classes and arriving in a more timely fashion.

The final piece of this initiative was to give students a way to voice concerns of safety in an anonymous and timely manner. We created "See Something??? Say Something!!!" to make this happen. A Google voice number was created and a series of posters and slides were put up

around the building and on hallway TVs. A QR code and phone number is used so students can report anything they see to the administrative team. The number comes to the computers and phones of all members of the administrative team. The number has been most commonly used for students to report when other students use vapes or have threatened self-harm. Data from this part of the Operation is available below. The use of this number has tapered in recent months, but students now directly email the administrative team from school-issued Chromebooks because they don't seem to care about the anonymous aspect any longer. They just want a safe place to learn.

Impact:
Staff and students alike have appreciated the lack of chaos in the hallways during classes. This system, along with the use of E-hallpass, make teaching more possible throughout the day. Survey data that is included below and the overall "feel" of the building has been improved through the implementation of this initiative.

Difficulties:
We made sure to include families as we put into place each step of this process. Families were sent an email with information and administrators made a video detailing how the process works. The greatest difficulty is always buy-in from staff and families. In this case, a vast majority of the staff know that something needed to change and they did not fight the system. We also found that families were overall supportive of what we were doing. The few families that did fight with the team's decision to keep their students out of classes and in AIR were quick to recognize the distraction the students created when out of class.

There were some technology upgrades that we needed in order to get the music to work effectively. We tried many different music players over the first few months including an iPad, a Chromebook and an old CD player. We ended up with an Amazon Alexa ball which works wonderfully. The playlist is created on Amazon Music and the music plays non-stop. The bell system runs two separate programs--one for the music, and one for the bells. It has worked very well now that we are properly trained on programming the system.

It is also important to have a good knowledge of spreadsheets and formulas to streamline the process of checking late students into the room during Sweeps. We have developed spreadsheets that automatically populate student names with ID numbers and will also highlight names of repeat offenders. Without these tools in place, it would take far too long to return students to classes.

Throughout the process, we have had excellent assistance from teachers on preps, the school resource officer, the truancy officer, and hall monitors. After each Sweep, this team assists in exciting the late students to their assigned classroom. It truly takes participation from the whole building to make this plan work.

Issues in Replicating:

Albert Lea High School has a bell system capable of playing music and a team of adults that participate in assisting to make the building safe and orderly. We also have video monitors throughout the building that we can use to display messages and announcements. We also have access to a high quality poster printer to make the necessary signs for passing on information to students. Without these resources, the implementation would have been more difficult. We did spend some money upgrading the bell system to allow an outside source to play music.

Data:

Q	Tardies	Tardies/Day
2022-2023		
Q1	12187	277.0
Q2	3480	89.2
Q3	4449	98.9
Q4	5447	113.5
2023-2024		
Q1	6620	165.5
Q2	7139	174.1

Total Tardies vs. Date