

IN THE MIDDLE:

After School Activities Lead to Better Grades

By Bailee Laux

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An excellent way to motivate students to keep their grades up would be to offer more after-school activities that require passing grades. It is an idea that I think would be successful. I believe it will help encourage them to do better. I know if I wanted to do something I love, I would try better in school for it. I'd especially bring my grades up if I couldn't go anywhere else for the activity.

As you should know, many students cannot wait to finish classes and get on to the fun! That fun includes after-school activities. Things like volleyball and basketball are popular sports in the school programs. The kids that join have to maintain average grades. That is a good start, but not all kids like these activities. Some aren't into sports. I think the school system should add more after-school activities for kids that have different interests.



If the schools would consider this, I would suggest that they let the students give their ideas of what after-school activities should be added. Some kids are more interested in art and technology. They may enjoy an after school art club for activities that they could only work on briefly during school.

For example: bean art. Last year in my digital art class, we created bean masks. I would love to do another project like that, but I don't have time. I also know two people who love to draw but aren't doing so well in their classes. If an art program that

focused on drawing was offered, it would motivate them to improve their grades.

For technology, kids might want to make more designs that could be useful or just for fun. It could be like an inventing or building class, making newly designed bridges with better structures or improved electronics.

Another positive effect of after-school activities would be attracting other students to our schools. Many parents would notice the rise in grade point average and want their children to have good grades, too. They could transfer their children to a different district hoping their child's grade point average would increase. If the activity program is expanded, I can almost guarantee escalating grades. We could be known as the intelligent school district.

Besides raising grades, after-school activities could help keep more students out of trouble. It is common for bored children to use bad behavior to entertain themselves. Keeping their minds active with positive activities that they enjoy reduces the temptation to cause trouble. In addition to all the benefits the students would get from the after-school activities, their parents would benefit by knowing that their child is doing something favorable to occupy themselves after school time.

If we add a few more interesting activities to coincide with student interests, we will surely see growth in the MCAS district.

Bailee Laux is a student at Barker Middle School. In the Middle is a regular column which is produced by middle school students in the Michigan City Area Schools.