

Hurley is in the House

Hurley Elementary / Middle School House System

Hurley Elementary / Middle (HEMS) has begun to implement the House System for our school. The idea came from attending the world renowned **Ron Clark Academy** (RCA) professional development, in which the principal and two teachers from HEMS had the wonderful opportunity to watch the house system in action. It seemed that this system brought a stronger sense of community to the academy that we also wanted to have in our school.

The HEMS House System plans were strongly based on what we observed and became part of RCA. We kept to the idea of four houses represented by a color, an animal, and a characteristic the students can identify with and strive to exemplify. The houses are identified with the following:

Team Amistad: Color – Red ; Symbol – A Deer ; House Characteristic - Friendship

Team Reveur: Color – Blue ; Symbol – A Wolf ; House Characteristic – Being a Dreamer

Team Isibindi: Color – Green ; Symbol – A Bear ; House Characteristic - Courageous

Team Alturismo: Color – Black ; Symbol – An Eagle ; House Characteristic –Being a Giver

The HEMS House System includes all of our nearly 400 students from Pre-K to 7th grade. Each was initiated into their individual house by climbing up and sliding down a 30 foot inflatable slide and, at the bottom, choosing a bracelet from the House Box. The students gathered with other house members near their house banner to welcome other members to their house. This initiation was exciting but also very encouraging to us. We witnessed upper-grade students helping the younger students up the slide and, after getting their bracelet, leading them to their house with big smiles and great enthusiasm. The excitement did not stop there though.

The excitement continues each day in the classrooms, hallways, and even the cafeteria. The students earn house points anywhere and everywhere in the school. The teachers award points for behavior, academics, and attendance. The custodians have awarded points for students assisting in keeping the school clean, and the cafeteria workers are very encouraging when giving points to students who show excellent

manners when receiving their breakfast or lunch. The administration also has a wheel to spin for students to earn extra points when they have shown excellent academic achievement or behavior worthy of extra points.

The points are an important part of the HEMS House System. They are awarded daily and recorded on a chart in each room. Once a week, the points are sent to the designated teacher to calculate them and post the weekly winner. The principal announces the weekly winning house on Friday. As for rewards, we have chosen to do this monthly. For December, we had a game of unwrapping small toys and decorating gingerbread men. As for the other houses, they also had a reward of spending time with their house members and practicing house chants. For the last 20 minutes of the monthly meeting, we all come to the gym to share our chants and celebrate our achievements together.

We have discovered that the HEMS house system has made an important impact on the interactions of our students. Students are cheering their fellow students on as they earn points, whether they are in that particular house or not. We have also seen improvement in behavior and manners. The students are part of a house, a team, a family that has to work together to be successful. The house system has allowed an opportunity for the students to interact across different grade levels. It is also a source of positive peer-pressure and motivation inside and outside of the classroom. Our goal for implementing the house system is for the students to become more successful, well-mannered individuals and to gain a stronger sense of community. We are seeing positive results through the House System.



The House System~ Ron Clark Academy

Initiation
of Houses



Slide Certified



Alturismo House-The Giver



Reveur-The Dreamer

Choose
your
bracelet to
determine
your House



Welcome to "Our House!"

Isibindi-Friendship