**Non-Verbal Signals**

A nonverbal communication system can be an effective classroom management tool. Establishing a system of hand signals in the classroom to communicate between student and teacher allows the lesson to continue or the work to be uninterrupted allows the continuous flow of learning. This is also the simplest way for teachers to get a message across quickly and quietly. Teachers can use non-verbal signals to reply to student requests and to emphasize actions that students need to perform. Additionally, signals allow the teacher to immediately know what the student needs, rather than stopping to respond.

**How to use:**

1. Determine student and teacher signals. Determine the non-verbal signals that you would like to implement in your classroom. Only use a few so that students are not overwhelmed or confused.

2. Create visuals. Create a sign or poster that displays an example of the signal and corresponding action that the symbol should be used for. Display the signs or posters in the classroom prominently in a common area where they can always be seen.

3. Create student and teacher signals. Teach these non-verbal signals with the beginning of the year classroom procedures. Be sure to review them frequently until students are using them consistently.

**When to use:**

- At the beginning of each school year.

- Throughout the entire school year.

- Re-teaching after returning from a long break in the calendar.

- During class discussions or testing, so as to not disturb the rest of the class

**Variations:**

**Other teacher signals.** Students who might protest an oral request often respond more readily to a hand signal.

**Attention Signal.** One of the most powerful non-verbal tools is a specific hand signal used by the teacher as a way to gain the attention of the entire class.