

Prizes After Class: choice, motivation and a truthful rewards journey

The evidence supports investigating understandable choice and taking reward-related risks seriously. It does not show that Prizes After Class improves learning, motivation or fairness.

Research by Education Angel Group. Last substantive review: September 19, 2026.

Education Angel Group is developing Prizes After Class and has an interest in the proposed product. This review does not establish its effectiveness.

Prepared by Education Angel Group (EAG), with AI-assisted research and drafting. Research date: September 19, 2026. EAG is developing Prizes After Class and has an interest in its success. This is a focused research report, not an independent evaluation. No participant interviews, product trial or fulfillment study was conducted.

1. Proposition, audiences and the present boundary

Prizes After Class is defined as the Runstr rewards store for points and prizes. Its intended job is to help an authorized participant understand a Runstr-backed reward balance, inspect a known product family, understand any disclosed variation, and follow a reservation through an honest fulfillment or correction process. Runstr owns identity and reward truth. Prizes After Class must not create a competing entitlement or point-issuance system. These are product definitions, not evidence of working operations. EAG product authority, AO

The current concept catalog contains twenty families: seven cosmetic-mystery families and thirteen known-item families, with 37 variants and 238 gallery assets. The family is known before reservation; only a disclosed cosmetic difference may be unknown. The earlier assumption that every family would have five mystery variants is superseded. These are digital concepts. Their approximate 11-18 audience does not establish age suitability, approved eligibility, physical safety, stock or supplier readiness. Costs and points prices remain unresolved. Catalog amendment, AO

The participant is central, but adults and operators have distinct jobs. A parent or school adult needs to understand terms and authority. An operator needs to distinguish a recorded reservation from a deliverable item. Support staff need a correction route when the wrong account, an unavailable item or a disputed state interrupts the journey. Future approved roles must not be excluded by assuming every participant is a student. Equally, no role gains access merely because it appears in a concept.

Overview. The evidence supports investigating understandable choice and taking reward-related risks seriously. It does not show that Prizes After Class improves learning, motivation or fairness. Existing school-store systems already document balances, catalogs and redemption workflows. The strongest potential case

for this product is therefore a specific Runstr handoff that users understand and operators can fulfill, with a meaningful option to decline. Whether that integration adds enough value to justify its burden remains open.

2. Questions and standards of evidence

This report addresses five questions:

1. What would make a points-and-prizes journey useful beyond an existing school store or non-prize recognition?
2. How do rewards, choice and reward timing relate to motivation and behavior, and where is the evidence unfavorable?
3. What does fair access require beyond equal cosmetic value?
4. Can participants distinguish eligibility, entitlement, reservation and delivery?
5. What evidence would justify continuing, changing or abandoning the proposed mechanism?

The sources answer different kinds of questions. Experiments can estimate effects of the intervention they tested. Meta-analyses summarize particular bodies of evidence, with different measures and inclusion rules. Accessibility guidance helps specify understandable interactions without demonstrating educational benefit. Vendor help pages establish documented capabilities, not reliable operation in every school. EAG product definition supplies the intended product boundary, not evidence of effectiveness.

A repeated distinction is between completing an activity to obtain something and choosing to continue after the reward ends. Another is between the number of actions and their quality. A system can record more activity while leaving interest unchanged, increasing pressure or adding operator work. Treating all of these as engagement would obscure the decision this report needs to inform.

The research does not supply a points price, a safe assortment, a procurement plan or a conversion rate. Assigning numbers to those decisions would create an appearance of precision without an economic or operational basis. The appropriate output here is a set of testable questions and explicit alternatives.

3. Need and context: the proposed problem is a broken promise risk

The immediate need is understandable reward administration. In the proposed journey, several facts must agree: who is signed in, what Runstr authorizes, which family is selected, what variation was disclosed, what a reservation does to points, and who can resolve a delivery problem. If any fact is stale or unclear, a participant may reasonably believe more has been promised than the operator can provide. This is EAG's analysis of the proposed service, not a measured prevalence estimate.

The digital catalog is useful preparation because it makes the intended assortment discussable. It does not answer whether a participant wants a given object, whether a household permits it, whether it is accessible, or whether it survives handling. Visual appeal and operational suitability need different evidence. Even strong enthusiasm in a concept review would not demonstrate the ability to deliver consistently.

A prize also sits within a relationship. An adult may frame it as recognition, a participant may see it as a requirement, and an operator may see it as a queue to clear. Research on incentives makes those interpretations worth investigating, but the retained studies do not establish how Runstr participants interpret this store. The report therefore does not describe participant demand as known.

The absence of a live points price is consequential. Participants cannot yet compare effort, waiting and prize desirability under actual rules. Nor can EAG calculate whether a proposed assortment remains affordable after shipping, defects, returns, support and replacements. A digital concept count is not a feasible operating assortment. The next research question is whether the promised interaction is understandable and wanted under realistic conditions, not how many catalog assets can be displayed.

4. Existing alternatives and the proposed gap

PBIS Rewards documents staff-mediated school and class store workflows, including balance review, cart adjustment, confirmation, immediate redemption and later redemption. This is an established capability comparator for reward administration. Its documentation does not establish that the vendor fulfills physical goods or improves motivation. Conflicting discovery material about independent student purchasing was not resolved, so this report makes no categorical claim about that capability.

PBIS Rewards Store support, P5

LiveSchool documents a student route to viewing points and shopping, while its setup guidance describes inventory and the ability to enable student shopping per store. Disabled checkout can still permit browsing. These pages establish described product behavior, not observed usability, procurement suitability or vendor-managed delivery. Student shopping, P6a; store setup, P6b

Alternative	Relevant comparison	Question for Prizes After Class
PBIS Rewards	Documented adult-operated store and redemption workflow	Does a Runstr handoff reduce duplicate work or introduce another queue?
LiveSchool	Documented points, student browsing/shopping and inventory configuration	What user need is unmet by an existing configurable store?
A school-managed manual process	Candidate local comparator, not evaluated here	Is software necessary at the expected volume?
Recognition or meaningful activity without a material prize	Candidate comparison condition	Does the material prize add value without unwanted pressure?

Figure 1

Existing capabilities and proposed alternatives

PBIS Rewards | documented

Staff-operated store workflow

Balance, confirmation and later redemption. Independent student purchasing remains unresolved here.

LiveSchool | documented

Student shopping and inventory configuration

First-party descriptions; actual operation and delivery service not tested.

Local or non-prize option | proposed

Compare total effort and voluntary value

Manual administration or recognition without goods may answer a different need. Not evaluated here.

Existing documentation does not establish comparative effectiveness or a unique PAC gap.

Existing capabilities and proposed alternatives

Existing documentation does not establish comparative effectiveness or a unique PAC gap.

- P5
 - P6a
 - P6b
 - A0. EAG product definition
-

These equivalents accompany the reader figures. Source IDs refer to the report references. A0 identifies EAG's product definition reviewed for the original report, not an external study or proof of availability. Other source IDs resolve to this report's reference and access record.

Figure 1. Existing capabilities and proposed alternatives

Existing documentation does not establish comparative effectiveness or a unique PAC gap.

PBIS Rewards | documented: Staff-operated store workflow. Balance, confirmation and later redemption. Independent student purchasing remains unresolved here.

LiveSchool | documented: Student shopping and inventory configuration. First-party descriptions; actual operation and delivery service not tested.

Local or non-prize option | proposed: Compare total effort and voluntary value. Manual administration or recognition without goods may answer a different need. Not evaluated here.

Sources: P5, P6a, P6b, AO.

Figure 1. First-party capability descriptions are separated from proposed alternatives. No comparative effectiveness, price or procurement judgment is implied. Text and data alternative.

EAG's inferred gap is narrow: a participant already entitled through Runstr should not have to reconstruct that relationship in another store, and operators should not have to reconcile contradictory reward states. That is an integration hypothesis. It would be weakened if an existing product meets the same need with less work, if Runstr cannot supply reliable entitlement, or if the new store mostly adds branding around functions schools already manage successfully.

A fair comparison would include training, exception handling and the work of actually obtaining and handing over goods. Counting only checkout clicks would favor whichever interface hides the most downstream work. Existing school practice deserves observation before anyone claims it is inadequate.

5. Evidence, counterevidence and transfer limits

Rewards can change interest as well as immediate behavior

Deci, Koestner and Ryan's 1999 meta-analysis of 128 experiments found that expected tangible rewards and several contingent reward conditions reduced post-reward free-choice motivation on average; feedback showed different patterns. Many studies involved brief tasks and children or college students. This is a reason to examine reward conditions and what happens after rewards stop, not proof that every reward is harmful. S10

Cerasoli, Nicklin and Ford's 2014 synthesis considered performance across school, work and physical settings. Intrinsic motivation explained more unique variance in performance quality, while incentives mattered more for quantity. Mixed populations and correlational predictors limit causal interpretation. These results concern performance and do not cancel concerns about post-reward interest. S11

Robinson and colleagues' 2019 author paper reports a randomized attendance-award study in grades 6-12 in one California county. Prospective awards did not improve average attendance; retrospective awards increased subsequent absence. Eligibility and address exclusions constrain transfer. The intervention used symbolic attendance awards, not chosen physical prizes, but it is direct counterevidence to assuming recognition must improve the targeted behavior. S12

Li, Hew and Du's 2024 gamification synthesis found a small positive pooled effect on intrinsic motivation with substantial heterogeneity. Much of the evidence concerned higher education and self-report; included studies did not measure free-choice behavior. Bundled game elements do not isolate redeemable objects. This is favorable adjacent evidence, not validation of Prizes After Class. S13

Figure 2

Different outcomes resist one reward verdict

Deci et al. 1999

Post-reward free choice

Expected tangible rewards often reduced this measure; brief experimental tasks limit transfer.

Cerasoli et al. 2014

Performance quality and quantity

Predictive synthesis distinguishes outcomes; not a causal PAC evaluation.

Robinson et al. 2019

Attendance after symbolic awards

Average prospective null and retrospective harm; one county and a different reward type.

Li et al. 2024

Self-reported gamified motivation

Small positive pooled result; heterogeneous interventions, mainly older learners.

Publication years identify sources, not a common intervention period. No effects are pooled or forecast for PAC.

Publication years identify sources, not a common intervention period. No effects are pooled or forecast for PAC.

- S10
- S11
- S12
- S13

Figure 2. Different outcomes resist one reward verdict

Publication years identify sources, not a common intervention period. No effects are pooled or forecast for PAC.

Deci et al. 1999: Post-reward free choice. Expected tangible rewards often reduced this measure; brief experimental tasks limit transfer.

Cerasoli et al. 2014: Performance quality and quantity. Predictive synthesis distinguishes outcomes; not a causal PAC evaluation.

Robinson et al. 2019: Attendance after symbolic awards. Average prospective null and retrospective harm; one county and a different reward type.

Li et al. 2024: Self-reported gamified motivation. Small positive pooled result; heterogeneous interventions, mainly older learners.

Sources: S10, S11, S12, S13.

Figure 2. The studies answer different questions. Their directions cannot be averaged into a predicted effect for this store. Publication years are not necessarily intervention years. Text and data alternative.

The practical consequence is a measurement choice. EAG should decide whether it wants to support worthwhile voluntary participation, increase a particular action count, improve an educational outcome, or make reward administration more reliable. Success on one cannot silently substitute for another. A reliable reservation system could be valuable even if it has no measurable academic effect; an increase in activity would be insufficient if participants felt obliged to produce it.

Choice is promising, but it is not a guarantee

Patall, Cooper and Robinson's 2008 meta-analysis included 41 studies. Its random-effects estimate for intrinsic motivation was $d=0.36$, with a 95% confidence interval of 0.27 to 0.46 across 46 samples. Subsequent learning was $d=0.10$, interval -0.02 to 0.21 across 14 samples, which does not establish a learning benefit. Comparison conditions and reward context mattered. Samples were not a specific test of this catalog's adolescent audience. P1, Table 4 and discussion

EAG's design hypothesis is that understanding and declining a prize matter more than the mere presence of several selectable objects. A participant who can choose a color but cannot comfortably decline the program may have little practical control. Nothing in the retained evidence shows that a cosmetic choice offsets an unwanted condition attached to earning points. Nor does a moderator result about numbers of choices establish the correct catalog size.

Fairness includes the route to the item

Blake and colleagues studied allocation decisions among children ages 4-15 in seven societies. Rejection of receiving less appeared across all studied populations; rejection of receiving more appeared in three. The sites were not nationally representative, and the allocation task was not a reward store. The finding cautions against assuming that one account of fairness is universal. P2

For this product, equal cosmetic value is an authority constraint, not a measured fairness outcome. EAG should distinguish opportunity to participate, opportunity to earn, access to the catalog, allocation when items are unavailable, and ability to obtain a correction. Two participants can receive equal-value objects after very different burdens. Conversely, equal availability does not require that everyone prefer the same object. These are proposed evaluation distinctions, not findings about actual users.

6. Proposed mechanism: understandable action with accountable follow-through

The proposed mechanism begins with a trustworthy handoff. Runstr supplies the authorized account and entitlement; Prizes explains the selected family and variation; the participant decides whether to proceed; an authorized operation records the reservation and points effect; a responsible operator supplies an accurate later state. Every link is necessary for the complete journey. No retained study evaluates this chain.

Figure 3

Proposed reservation and correction paths

Conceptual only. Every link is proposed.

Participant decision

1. Runstr-authorized entitlement
↓ proposed link
2. Known family and disclosed variation
↓ proposed link
3. Understand points effect
↓ proposed link
4. Proceed or decline

Hypothesis: understandable choice, with no delivery promise implied.

Operational follow-through

1. Recorded reservation
↓ proposed link
2. Responsible fulfillment owner
↓ proposed link
3. Verified later state

Unknown: real stock, costs, supplier readiness and completed handover.

Correction route

1. Stale, unavailable or disputed state
↓ proposed link
2. Explain permitted next action
↓ proposed link
3. Authorized correction or return

Proposed route; no existing response time or working operation asserted.

EAG conceptual model, not an evaluated causal chain. Reservation and delivery require separate evidence.

Proposed reservation and correction paths

EAG conceptual model, not an evaluated causal chain. Reservation and delivery require separate evidence.

- A0. EAG product definition
 - P3
 - P4
-

Figure 3. Proposed reservation and correction paths

EAG conceptual model, not an evaluated causal chain. Reservation and delivery require separate evidence.

Participant decision. Runstr-authorized entitlement → Known family and disclosed variation → Understand points effect → Proceed or decline. Hypothesis: understandable choice, with no delivery promise implied.

Operational follow-through. Recorded reservation → Responsible fulfillment owner → Verified later state. Unknown: real stock, costs, supplier readiness and completed handover.

Correction route. Stale, unavailable or disputed state → Explain permitted next action → Authorized correction or return. Proposed route; no existing response time or working operation asserted.

Sources: AO, P3, P4.

Figure 3. EAG conceptual model. A recorded reservation is not a promise of stock or delivery. The help and decline routes are part of the proposed service, not evidence that they already operate. Text and data alternative.

The central hypothesis is that continuity plus clear state information reduces avoidable confusion. A stronger claim, that the store increases learning or healthy motivation, requires additional evidence and a different study. An operator could implement the state sequence correctly while participants still misunderstand it. A participant could understand it perfectly while no supplier is ready. These outcomes must remain visible separately.

The cosmetic-mystery distinction should remain bounded. A family with a disclosed variable color or pattern is different from an unknown category, unknown value or rarity chase. The current definition offers no basis for resale speculation or an expectation that repeated reservations produce a more valuable outcome. Research has not established that this bounded surprise is desirable, harmless or comprehensible for the intended audience. It should be evaluated as a specific feature rather than defended using general enthusiasm about rewards.

7. Research-derived design concepts

These concepts are proposals for later evaluation, not implemented interfaces or new product approvals.

A decision summary before commitment. Present the family, what is fixed, what may vary, the verified points effect and the applicable correction terms together. A participant should be able to explain those facts without remembering a rule from an earlier screen. Unknown economic inputs should stay unknown in research materials rather than becoming plausible-looking prices.

A status that names what happened. W3C's supplemental cognitive-accessibility guidance recommends recognizable feedback after an action and programmatically determinable status. It is guidance additional to WCAG conformance, not a child-redemption trial. P3 EAG's translation is to distinguish a submitted request, affected points, pending fulfillment and confirmed delivery. Each state needs an owner and a useful next step.

A recoverable consequential action. W3C's explanation of Success Criterion 3.3.4 describes reversal, checking and correction, or review and confirmation for covered consequential submissions. This does not establish that points are money or determine legal applicability to this product. P4 The product question is whether a mistaken reservation can be understood and corrected without repeated disclosure or adult escalation for an ordinary error.

An equal-quality exit. Declining or returning to Runstr should be understandable and available without invented urgency. A completed reservation should not be the only counted successful outcome. Someone who understands the offer and decides against it may have completed the information task successfully.

Separate known-item and cosmetic-mystery explanations. The thirteen known-item families should not inherit an uncertainty label merely because seven other families allow cosmetic variation. Participants should encounter only the conditions that apply to their choice. A useful comprehension comparison would ask whether either explanation leads people to infer an undisclosed difference in value.

8. Risks, equity and operating burden

The main motivation risk is that the reward becomes the reason for an activity participants would otherwise value, or becomes a condition they feel unable to refuse. This is a risk suggested by adjacent evidence, not an observed PAC effect. It warrants private, age-appropriate questions about pressure alongside activity measures. A public leaderboard or total reservations would be a poor substitute for that evidence.

Access should be examined at each step. A participant may need help with language, navigation, sensory access, device availability or an adult decision. Assistance can be valuable while still creating a delay or privacy cost. An evaluation should distinguish support chosen by the participant from a dependency the design unnecessarily imposes. No access subgroup should be described as served merely because it can open the catalog.

Fairness also depends on unavailable and contested states. A participant who cannot obtain an item needs an accurate explanation and a correction path consistent with the approved rules. Equal cosmetic value cannot repair unauthorized point changes or a permanently unresolved reservation. Nor should a support process make a participant prove personal circumstances irrelevant to the case.

Physical and financial questions remain unresolved. Digital images do not establish materials, safety, defects, age suitability or shipping feasibility. Unknown all-in costs prohibit an honest estimate of reward economics. Production review must establish the actual assortment and responsibilities before research copy promises a deliverable item. This report supplies no legal, product-safety or procurement determination.

Institutional resources and personal prizes also remain separate. A teacher administering school-owned supplies is not thereby a personal reward beneficiary. The current product definition does not authorize teacher personal prizes or turn points into cash or stored value. These are EAG boundaries, not claims that a particular structure has passed legal review.

Finally, labor needs measurement. Someone must answer questions, reconcile an exception and arrange actual handover. Those minutes and interruptions should be attributed to the responsible role. A participant-facing simplification that transfers every uncertainty to a teacher may improve the screen while worsening the service.

9. Evaluation and decisions that would change the proposition

Begin with comprehension of a labeled synthetic journey. Ask participants to explain the known family, disclosed variation, points effect, current status and next step. Include known-item, cosmetic-mystery, unavailable and correction scenarios. Record misunderstandings by type and whether assistance was needed. This would assess the explanation, not demand or fulfillment.

An operational study should follow only after eligibility, inventory authority, economics and fulfillment responsibilities have real approval. Distinguish an attempted reservation, accepted reservation, authorized points change, handed-over item and resolved exception. Include failed and abandoned attempts in denominators; studying only successful redeemers would hide the participants most likely to encounter barriers.

Evaluation question	Proposed evidence	Reason to change course
Do participants understand the offer?	Teach-back and observed correction tasks	Persistent confusion about variation, points or delivery
Can people decline comfortably?	Private feedback and voluntary continuation	Reported pressure or avoidance of ordinary participation
Does the integration help?	Comparison with an existing store or local process	Added account or reconciliation work without user benefit
Can operators fulfill accurately?	Reconciled records and exception timelines	Unresolved entitlement, stock or delivery mismatches
Is access fair in practice?	Approved subgroup comparisons with burden measures	Persistent avoidable differences in earning or redeeming

A later motivation study should name its outcome before choosing a design. If the concern is durable interest, it needs observation after incentives end, not only while a prize is available. If the concern is task quality, a count of submissions is insufficient. A non-prize comparison should remain credible and respectful; an unusually restrictive control would exaggerate the apparent value of choice.

There is no evidence-based numeric success threshold in this report. EAG should agree on consequential error definitions, acceptable burden and stopping criteria before collecting results. Small formative samples can reveal serious misunderstandings but cannot prove absence of harm or equitable performance across all groups. Any broader causal study needs its own ethical, privacy and statistical design.

The proposition should narrow if understandable administration is its only demonstrated benefit. It should change if cosmetic surprise confuses value or worsens preference matching. It should pause if entitlement cannot be reconciled or fulfillment obligations remain unclear. It should be reconsidered if a simpler existing route supplies the same value at lower total burden. These are proposed decisions, not findings that any condition has occurred.

10. Methods, limitations, references and corrections

This focused review used EAG's current product definition and research brief, original research papers and syntheses, W3C guidance, and first-party product documentation. Research was accessed on September 19, 2026. The central reward sources previously appraised for Runstr were reopened and their scope checked for this report. No new systematic search or pooled effect calculation was conducted.

Selection was question-led. The review retained unfavorable reward findings and existing alternatives rather than treating supportive research as a product endorsement. It did not appraise every cited primary study inside each synthesis. Some evidence is historical; its publication date is not a statement about current students or this service. Full original-source text was available for the retained research, while inaccessible or conflicting vendor leads were not used to establish disputed capabilities.

The linked references above are the report's source trail. P1 and P2 are original research syntheses/experiments; S10-S13 cover distinct incentive and gamification questions; P3-P4 provide accessibility guidance; P5-P6 describe vendor capabilities. A0 is product authority. None is direct evidence of PAC effectiveness.

No comprehensive correction or retraction registry search was performed for the new choice and fairness sources; no visible correction notice appeared in the accessed originals. The earlier Runstr appraisal recorded bounded correction checks for the reused reward papers. That is not proof that no correction exists. Vendor documentation can change, so any procurement or implementation comparison needs a fresh capability check.

EAG authored the interpretation with AI assistance. No independent expert review, student testing, physical sample inspection, supplier audit or economic evaluation is represented here. A future correction should identify the affected claim, replace its source or interpretation, and update any dependent figure. The present conclusion is conditional: a truthful, optional and accountable Runstr rewards journey is worth investigating only if it adds value beyond available alternatives and its real operation supports the promise participants understand.

Figure text and data alternatives

Complete semantic alternatives accompany each figure in this reader and its text download. Source IDs refer to the references in this report. A0 identifies EAG's product definition reviewed for the original report, not an external study or proof of availability. Other source IDs resolve to this report's reference and access record.

Corrections and entity context

Readers identifying an error can contact EAG with the section, disputed statement and supporting source. Prizes After Class provides the public entity context, not an external citation for EAG's product claims.