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EDUC 360: Classroom Behavioral Management  
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### **Start of School Experience**

On Monday, August 20<sup>th</sup> through Tuesday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, I had my start of school experience at Eisenhower Elementary in Warsaw, IN. I mostly observed in my fourth grade general education placement. Since, my special education placement was trying to organize schedules with the first, third, and fifth grade teachers. The special education teacher thought I would gain more information about the beginning of the school year in fourth grade. While I was in my fourth grade placement, I had the chance to observe the introduction of classroom management to the students through the establishment of routines, procedures, and classroom rules/ consequences.

One of the first routines the students were introduced to was the morning routine. The teacher has a pocket chart on the blackboard in the front of the room with illustrations and verbal instructions on what they are to do. The teacher explained the routine to the students at the end of the first day to let the students know what she wanted them to do the next morning. Most of the students were able to perform the morning routine with little teacher assistance. Some students forgot to indicate at the back of the room whether they were packing or eating a school lunch by putting the popsicle stick with their name on it in the appropriate basket. The morning routine is essential to classroom management in a variety of ways. First, the morning routine gives the students something to do when they first arrive that requires little supervision so the teacher can still greet all of the students at the door. Since, all of the students do not arrive at the same time you would not want to start teaching a lesson until school officially starts at 9:05am. Second, the routine gives the students a chance to use the bathroom. During class, this cuts down on

interruptions to use the bathroom. Third, the students are supposed to make sure they have at least two sharpened pencils. This way the students do not have to get up out of their seats during the lesson to sharpen a pencil. Fourth, the students pick up their squirt boxes and put them by their desk as part of the morning routine. Their squirt boxes contain two to three books that the students would like to read. Once they have finished everything in the morning routine, the students can read silently until class starts.

Before going to their first special which was P.E., the teacher explained the proper way the students should conduct themselves while walking in the hallways. I noticed that this is in the teacher's handbook under student conduct regulations. At Eisenhower Elementary, the students are expected to walk quietly on the right side of the hall. The teacher explained this to the students by telling them to think of their bodies as a cars and what side of the road do cars drive on. Also, she pointed out that cars do not intentionally crash into other cars. The teacher had the students line up at the back of the room according to their assigned number. The teacher modeled for the students that when they are in the hallways they must walk with their hands in their pockets or behind their backs. When the students lined up for lunch later that day, the teacher pointed out some students that were doing an excellent job of looking forward and being quiet and the other students soon did the same.

When the students got back from lunch, the teacher went over classroom rules and consequences. All of the students had three laminated lady bugs on their desk. She explained to the students that at the beginning of each week every student will start out with three bugs. However, the bugs can be taken away if she sees them doing something she does not like. She used bugs because of the old saying "that really bugs me". If the students, still have all three bugs by the end of the week they get to pick three pieces of candy from the treat jar. How many

bugs they have left indicates how many treats they get. If the students have used up all three of their bugs before the end of the week and the teacher sees something she does not like for a fourth time, the student will not be allowed to play at recess time. My teacher said that this rarely happens. However, I do not know if I agree with taking away recess time. Otherwise, I really like this system. Also, the first week was a trial week and no bugs were taken away. The teacher just gave warnings to the students, and she would tell the students that they would have lost a bug for that.

The classroom environment is very open and inviting. The teacher welcomed all of the students by giving them a goody bag in order to remind the students of the things that will be important for having a great year. For example, a 3 musketeers bar with the saying “We are all for one and one for all!” to show the students that they will need to work together. The teacher went through the goody bag with the students asking them what each item and saying meant. Also, the teacher shared a shoe box of items with the students to help the students get to know her a little better. All of the students were asked to bring a shoe box with items from home that would help us get to know them better too. However, the students did not have to share their box with the class if they did not feel comfortable. All of the students shared except for one student.

The teacher also has classroom helpers that are switched every week. I like that she leaves it optional whether or not the students want to do a certain job or not. She had the students gather around her at the rocking chair when she had a discussion about classroom jobs and why they are important. I think classroom jobs are a great way to teach children about responsibility.

I cannot wait to see how the students are adapting to this teacher’s classroom management style, when I observe again on Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>. I think it will work well since she is establishing a community of learners.