Jeff Mendenhall's Classroom Management Plan

Philosophy of Classroom Management

My philosophy of classroom management comes from several different theorists in which I will discuss. Fred Jones and Barbara Coloroso are my two most influential theorists. I would like to believe that I have mixed Coloroso's inner discipline and Jones's positive discipline theories with my own splash of rewards and punishments. Although Coloroso and Jones's agree in that neither punishments nor rewards should ever or rarely be used, I believe that at times it has to come to this. I am not so set in one specific theory that I discredit others, I believe the best way to provide a safe classroom management plan is to take ideas from several theorists, as well as to create one's own ideals. Not one single plan is going to work in every single situation.

Fred Jones believes that in order to build a positive classroom environment teachers should model appropriate behavior and use appropriate classroom management methods. Thus, Jones's theory earned the tag positive discipline. Jones tells us that teachers not only tell students how to act, they also demonstrate the behaviors in all their daily routines. Jones uses effective body language as limit setting to influence positive behaviors. The body language that is used includes eye contact, physical proximity, body carriage, and facial expressions. If a student is breaking a rule, the teacher will do one or more of these. I have seen this limit setting work several times. Jones believes contrasts from Coloroso in that he believes in using incentives. Jones believes that students deserve incentives for good behaviors. The incentives can be small things such as stars, being dismissed first, or having work displayed, but it gives students something to work towards.

There are three main beliefs that I take from Barbara Coloroso. One belief that I take from Coloroso is that the teacher should give critical life messages. These messages include, "I

believe in you", "You are listened to", and "I know you can handle this", just to name a few. The belief is that if the teacher instills confidence in the student it will help them trust themselves and gain self-discipline. The second belief is that children need consequences. However, Coloroso is explicit about differentiating consequences from punishment. She explains that there are two natural and reasonable consequences. Natural consequences can be shown with this example: Your second grade student will not place a coat on for recess. Instead of arguing with him about it you allow him to go outside. The effect is that he will be cold. However, reasonable consequences are ones that require planning because the teach students rather than punish them. The last belief that I take away from Coloroso is to be aware of using destructive words. One example of this goes as follows: Instead of the teacher praising, "John, you're a smart boy. You made an A." Use appreciation such as, "Thank you for your fine work on the test."

Top Ten Beliefs/Practices

- **I believe in showing students appreciation rather than praise.**

    Just as Barbara Coloroso, I believe in showing appreciation towards students rather than praise because it still allows them to feel gratitude without making others feel bad about themselves. Over-praising students may make others feel as if they are not worthy of being in the classroom. However, appreciation shows what the student did in order to receive mention. For example, "Thank you for your work," rather than "Your A was the only one in the class." The first example is something that can be used on each individual. One must remember that a student may work hard and still not receive an A.

- **I believe that using Coloroso's inner-discipline theory is important in a classroom.**

  I think that Coloroso has some really intriguing ideas with the inner-discipline theory. She believes that the inner-discipline theory will leave the child's self-worth and dignity intact. This is something that I don't want to compromise in my classroom. I want students to know that they are important and to understand the importance of making good decisions.

- **I believe that Fred Jones's theory of positive discipline has its place in a classroom.**

  Fred Jones believes that positive discipline should come from the teacher in everything that they do. I want to use this modeling theory in my classroom. I will not only model proper behavior throughout all daily routines, but will also acknowledge the students that demonstrate this.

- **I believe that students should have incentives for good behavior.**

  Fred Jones brings about a plan for incentives for good behavior. These incentives do not have to be high in cost or have any consequences in instruction time. Some of the incentives that Jones describes are receiving stars for positive behavior, allowing a student with good behavior to be dismissed first, or displaying the work of an individual. These are all incentives that can be easily implemented into any classroom.

- **I believe in Curwin and Mendler's 3-D Discipline Approach.**

  The 3-D Discipline Approach is in the following stages: Prevention, Action, and Resolution. The prevention stage is used to minimize problems by allowing the teacher and students to develop rules and consequences together. The action stage is what is to be done once problems occur in the classroom. I, as the teacher, will give a warning in which I will calmly state the inappropriate behavior and the consequence, if repeated.

Next, if the inappropriate behavior continues I will implement the consequence, and then finally will use proximity control to prevent minor problems. Finally, the resolution stage is what can be done for chronic misbehavior. If the consequences are ineffective I will set up a conference to formulate a new plan with the student. If there are three unsuccessful attempts at an individual contract, I will bring in a third party to help with negotiations.

- **I believe that Curwin and Mendler's nine principles for consequences implementation is a valid practice to follow.**

  The nine principles for consequences go as follows:

  1. Always implement a consequence: be consistent
  2. Simply state the rule and consequence.
  3. Be physically close; use proximity control.
  4. Make direct eye contact with the student.
  5. Use a soft voice.
  6. Catch the student being good.
  7. Don't embarrass the student in front of the class.
  8. Be firm but anger-free when giving the consequence.
  9. Don't accept excuses, bargaining, or whining.

- **I believe in Lee Canter's theory in which he states that assertive teachers mean what they say and say what they mean.**

  Canter tells us that assertive teachers let the students know their expectations in a calm and business-like manner. Also, they back up their words with actions when necessary. This follows other beliefs in that teachers will not become angry when a student performs

a behavior that is not acceptable in the room. Instead, I will calmly state the misbehavior and the rule that it is breaking. Next, I will ask the student to collect themselves and follow the rule(s) of the classroom.

- **I believe Barbara Coloroso when she tells us that children and young adults are worth the efforts that adults exert to teach them inner discipline.**

    I will not treat a child or a young adult in a way in which I would not wanted to be treated myself. This practice follows the Golden Rule in which we learn at a young age. If I ever question how I am treating a student I will take a step back to think about how I would want to be treated in that situation.

- **I believe in Coloroso's process of discipline over an act of punishment.**

    Coloroso's process of discipline has four aspects:

    1. It shows students what they should have done.

    2. It gives them as much ownership of the problem as they are able to handle.

    3. It gives them options for solving the problem.

    4. It leaves their dignity intact.

    This process of discipline deals directly with the problem behavior instead of the authority of the teacher.

- **I believe that Fred Jones's back-up system for negative behavior is worthy of practicing in the classroom.**

    Jones has a back-up system that becomes increasingly severe as a negative behavior increases. This back-up system can flow as follows: Warning, Conference with students, Time-out, Loss of privileges, and so on. This gives me, as a teacher, confidence in that I know what will come if a behavior becomes increasingly negative. Also, the students are

going to know each step of the back-up system so that they are aware of the consequences of their actions.

Classroom Management Strategies

There are several strategies that will be utilized for each stage of classroom management. As far as the preventative stage, I will communicate the needs and expectations of students clearly, create a warm and nurturing environment, develop rules and consequences along with students, and give students a daily schedule. During the supportive stage, I will deal with the misbehavior quickly, consistently, and respectfully. Corrective behaviors may include conferences with the student, behavior plans, or removal from the class.

Preventative

I believe it is important to have several preventative strategies in my classroom management plan because it is a way for my students to feel valued as individuals. First, I will communicate the needs and expectations of students clearly. Each child has the right to learn just as I, as the teacher, have the right to teach without disruption from others. The student has the responsibility to be prepared once entering the classroom. As the teacher, I have the responsibility to choose curriculum that meets state standards and is taught in an interesting and informative fashion.

I will develop rules and consequences along with students. Although I will have a set of rules that will not change and will follow the school or districts mandated rules, I will develop others along with students. Consequences will be developed in the same manner. Here is my plan of action:

- **The rule is broken once**: I will conference with the student. This should be done in a quiet area in the classroom or just outside the door as to not embarrass the child. I will give the student options as to what to do in the future.

- **The rule is broken a 2nd time**: There should be at least one of the following in place: time out, detention, notice to parent, student writes a note to parent, a behavior journal is started. A detention most likely will not be used at this time unless the student breaks a rule in a drastic manner.

- **The rule is broken a 3rd time**: The parent will be informed in which they are easily reachable, whether it be a phone call, by e-mail or in a conference. Also, I will develop a behavior plan with the student in which the parent will be involved in or aware of if they choose not to have involvement.

- **The rule is broken a 4th time**: A parent conference will be in order for the fourth offense. Other professionals such as a principal, vice principal, special education teacher, or board specialist will be involved. An in-school or out-of-school suspension may be implemented.

The consequences will be implemented fairly among all students. The severity of the rule that is broken may depend upon one or more steps being skipped. For instance, bullying or fighting will be handled more severely than a student that is speaking out of turn and disrupting others. In each step I will work with the student to determine options and choices for misbehaviors. Rules, consequences, and expectations will be appropriately displayed in the classroom so that it is never in question.

I believe that the classroom should have a warm, nurturing environment. It will be the responsibility of the students, as well as me, to have a clean and orderly environment. A clean

environment allows for fewer distractions. It is important to me that each child in the classroom feels that they belong in our community. Each student in this community is attempting to become a successful student and a responsible individual. I will stress the importance of community and taking care of one another's needs. Finally, I will use the slogan *Semper Fidelis* in my classroom. This Latin term stands for "Always Faithful." In my classroom this will be defined as being faithful to me, one another, and to the school. I believe that if each student buys into this slogan several misbehaviors can be prevented before they get out of hand. This is also something that each student can use to correct someone else's behavior by simply stating, "Semper Fi."

Although my motto as a teacher has become, "be flexible," I believe that students should be given a daily schedule. Schedules should be followed as closely as possible, although it is unreasonable to believe that this can occur every single day. The students have the right to know when lessons will be taught as to know when they need to listen to the instructor and what type of lesson it is. Some lessons will be teacher directed, while others may be student directed with cooperative learning. The students should know that in the classroom, ever minute counts!

Supportive

I believe that it is important to deal with misbehaviors quickly, consistently, and respectfully. If a misbehavior occurs to the point where it is disrupting my instruction or student learning I will deal with it immediately. First, I will try to use the positive discipline theory by giving the student nonverbal messages such as using eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, or physical proximity to urge the student to correct their behavior. This theory is by Fred Jones, along with

using a positive behavior of another individual or group in order to support positive behavior among all.

If positive discipline does not work, I will conference with the student immediately or give the student a time in which I will conference with them and politely ask them to stop the behavior. Either way, I will do this without embarrassing the student. I feel that if I embarrass a student in front of classmates I will have lost them, and worst yet they may believe that they know how to get to me. I understand that some students will try to challenge my authority, but this is when I will use the Golden Rule of inner discipline that Coloroso speaks of by treating the student how I want to be treated. If the misbehavior continues, the consequence list will be followed. It is very important to me that I do not allow a student to engage me into a conflict. This would not be proper modeling of inner discipline and would most likely have a destructive effect on my relationship with my students.

Corrective

The corrective behaviors will go along with the list of consequences that I spoke of earlier. For mild to moderate misbehaviors such as speaking out of turn whether it is in class or in line I will first use the positive discipline theory, then will follow with a conference if necessary. The list will be followed in order with these behavior problems. For more severe behaviors such as bullying, fighting, cursing, and so on, one or more consequences may be skipped. If these behaviors occur I will immediately discuss this with a parent or guardian, as well as another professional. These behaviors are ones that may not only interfere with effective instruction, but may also bring down the classroom community and they will not be tolerated. Again it is important to me to apply these consequences fairly and with respect.

Classroom Rules & Consequences

On the first day of school I will place students into small groups and have them discuss classroom rules that they would like to have for the entire year. I think that it's important that I form the small groups so that everyone is included from the first day of school. My hope is that the students will create classroom rules that coincide with my own. It is important, though, that they realize this is not the time that we are discussing consequences, simply the rules. The rules will be as followed:

- Follow Directions

- Complete Work On Time

- Respect Fellow Classmates

- Raise Your Hand And Wait To Be Called On

- Stay On Task

- Respect Other People's Property

- Always Do Your Best

I will prompt the students with questions or cues if they are struggling to come up with any of these rules. I believe that if students follow these rules in class then they will have a safe environment in which learning can occur. These rules will be discussed thoroughly so that they are easily understood. Afterwards, each child will place their signature on the poster signifying that they agree to these rules and that they will follow them.

Determining consequences is an issue that may become difficult for me. As I have stated, I want to be fair among all students and give the consequences with respect. I believe that with clear-cut rules and effective instruction, students know when they have misbehaved. Thus,

they should understand the consequences that follow. I have stated the consequences under the preventative stage of classroom management, so I will not state them again. I will implement the consequences as fairly as possible, but realistically there are some misbehaviors that are more severe than others. Some teachers may treat all misbehaviors in the same manner, but I don't believe this is possible.

Consequences for fighting, bullying, or cursing cannot be treated the same as a student that gets out of his or her seat without asking for permission. Although each step may still be applied, the more severe misbehaviors will most likely include more than one plan of action. A student that performs a mild to moderate misbehavior such as getting out of his or her seat without asking or disrupting another student by talking will likely follow the plan of action listed above. However, for a more severe misbehavior such as fighting the student will likely receive a conference with the teacher (step 1), a detention (step 2), and a behavior plan or parent conference (step 3 & 4). As I stated I want to be as fair as possible, but with any justice system there are misbehaviors that are more severe than others and these include more severe consequences.

The consequences will be posted on the wall next to the rules poster. A list of the consequences will also be written on a poster and signed by the students that they understand and agree to the consequences. Both posters will stay up all year so that anyone that may enter the classroom; another teacher, student, parent, and so on will immediately know the rules and consequences in this community. A letter will go home to the parents to make them aware of what is expected and what may happen if these expectations are not met. The parents and guardians are very much a part of this community and they will be made aware of important matters such as this.

<center>**Classroom Procedures**</center>

Late Work

Late work is an important issue for many teachers. Although I feel that students should have their work turned in on time and it is a good way to teach responsibility, I feel that it is of greater importance for the students to simply complete their work. Many students can be discouraged by turning in work if it's not on time because of the penalty that they will incur. I feel that a penalty must be in place for late work, although I do not believe in a harsh one. If a student loses an entire letter grade or more for turning something in late they may just decide to not do the work at all. This is unfortunate and I am more concerned about students completing their work.

For each day that an assignment is late I will incur a one point penalty. I feel that this penalty still gives the student responsibility and motivation to turn an assignment in on time, but does not discourage them from completing an assignment simply because it may be a day or two late.

Absentees

Students that are absent will go to their mailboxes to look for any assignment that they may have missed. The absent student will receive the number of days to complete the homework that correlates with the number of consecutively missed days. For example, if the student missed two days in a row then he/she will receive two days to complete and hand in the homework. This does not excuse the student to miss or turn homework in late that they are present for after absences. Homework that is given during absences will be marked *Absent*, with the date, on the top of the page before it is placed in the mailbox.

Grading

Overall, grading should be similar between tests, quizzes, projects, class work, and homework. Unless otherwise noted by the school system, my grading scale will be as follows:

Grade	Percentage
A+	100-97
A	96-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70
D+	69-67
D	66-63
D-	62-60
F	59-0

All grading will be done in a colored pen, either red or green, so that it is easily readable for the student. Due to this, students are not to have red or green pens in their supply box.

Homework and class work will be gathered together for a total of 40% of the grade. There will be two different ways in which homework and class work will be graded. First of all, this work will be graded simply on completion. I believe in grading on completion in order to encourage the student to complete his or her work. Even if a student does not feel that they understand the topic they are able to receive credit for giving an effort towards completing the

work that they are responsible for. Next, this work may be graded in several different ways. Depending upon what the assignment is there may be a rubric, checklist, or answer key. These will be made easily accessible for anyone that would like to see them.

Individual and group projects may be given over specific units in each curriculum category. Students will most often have a choice of what they are able to complete in terms of how it is prepared, presented, graded, and so on. I understand that all students have different learning styles and I do not want to compromise this, although students will learn to collaborate with others and use cooperative learning skills. Projects will total 15% of a student's total grade.

Tests and quizzes will be given periodically. Both are very important to assess the knowledge that the students have gained. This also helps to keep me accountable for the learning that has taken place. Although everything the student does will be assessed in some way (observations, reflections, documentations, and so on) tests and quizzes will be the overall student factor for how this takes place. Quizzes will be given periodically throughout lessons. The students may or may not know when a quiz is coming. I feel that pop-quizzes work nicely to see the true knowledge that a student has gained at a specific point in time. Many students are able to cram for a large quiz or tests, but surprise quizzes will allow me to see what my student knows right now.

Tests will be a way to assess learning on a large scale. I will warn the students several days before a test that one will be coming up. I will also review with the students' days ahead of time. I will give all students a chance to succeed. My tests will have several different options; multiple choice, essay, fill in the blank, short answer, to give students several ways to achieve.

These tests will most likely cover chapters and units that have been discussed for several days at a time. Tests and quizzes will work for a total of 30% of the grade.

The final 15% of a student's grade may be a little different than what most people are accustomed. This will fall under the participation and community. I feel that it is important for all students to participate and feel comfortable in our classroom, which is a community. Every week the students will write a paragraph in their journals about how they have contributed in a positive way to our community. I want to stress the importance of this safe, nurturing environment and I believe that this is a way for students to discuss what they have done or can do to improve our classroom and school.

Beginning the school day

As students enter the classroom they will immediately have responsibilities. Each student will empty their bags into their own lockers, get the supplies that are necessary, sharpen pencils, check attendance boxes, and place their clothes pins on bulletin board for school lunch or packed lunch. Once students have finished these they will take their seats and begin their morning work. Soft music will be playing from the time the first student enters the classroom until the time all students are in their seats working quietly. Once the music has stopped I will record the time in which it took the students to complete their morning responsibilities. The purpose of recording this will be discussed later.

Once the students have taken their seats they will begin working on their daily oral language. This will consist of two sentences that contain grammatical and/or spelling errors in which the student must make corrections. When one student finishes the daily oral language he will find a partner that is done as well. They will check one another's sentences and work

together to make them grammatically correct. If at any time students begin to take advantage of working with partners this will be taken away. A group will be chosen to correct the sentences on the overhead in front of the class. If the students answers are correct they will gain one minute, however if they are incorrect they will lose one minute.

Music will be played at the beginning of each day. I feel that music can help bring someone to a good mood and it is also used to time how long it takes student to do their morning responsibilities. This will also be used when students get out of their seats to get in line, whether it is for a special, bathroom break, lunch, recess, and so on. A compact disc with music that last 60 minutes will be used Monday-Friday. However much time is left on the disc by 1:00 p.m. Friday will be how much free time the students will receive at the end of the day. Student free time may consist of activities such as:

- Crossword puzzles

- Alphabetizing a list of words

- Sentence Building (refrigeration magnets)

- Math worksheets

- Silent Reading

This is a list of just a few of the free time activities that will be provided for the students. If the students find activities for free time they may bring them to me in order to be approved. If the students run over 60 minutes they will be given an extra assignment.

Note: If 60 minutes becomes drastically too long or too short it can be modified.

Getting attention/signaling for quiet

Gaining attention from students is an item that is of great importance. I enjoy allowing students the time to talk during class. I believe that cooperative learning is a key element in elementary education. Discussing issues during group or partner work will be imperative in my classroom. However, there will be times when I need to redirect the attention of students back to the whole class setting.

When I am within a range of a few children I will begin stating, "If you can hear me, clap once; if you can hear me, clap twice" and so on. I will say this in a normal-level voice and will repeat it until all of the students are quiet. I really like using this attention getter because I believe that it is important to use a normal-level voice while signaling silence. I understand that students may become a little too accustomed to this and begin to ignore the signal. To mix things up once in awhile I may throw in a direction such as, "If you can hear me, touch your nose." Still using a normal-level voice I will be able to find what students are listening to the directions that I give.

Classroom Helpers

My classroom will have classroom helpers in which each student is assigned a job. I feel that when the students have a job they become responsible for the environment of our community. This is something that I want my students to take seriously and in doing so I will have the students apply for certain jobs. The students will fill out job applications for the job(s) that they would like to have. Once the jobs are assigned the students will perform them for one month. At the end of that month students will apply for a different job and the cycle will repeat.

The students must understand that these jobs are very important for our community to survive and if they do not take their job serious it is possible for them to be fired.

The following list is possible jobs that one or students may hold: mail carrier, scrap monsters, supply shelf manager, library helper, overhead projector cleaner, table washer, locker checker, and so on. These are just a few of the jobs that students will be responsible for withholding n the classroom. Suggestions for other jobs in the classroom may be taken from the students.

Selecting Groups

Selecting groups is another issue that I find of particular importance. Students of any age level often find working in groups difficult if they are with peers that they are not comfortable with. As I have stated I am a believer in cooperative learning. This learning strategy can help students with different levels of ability improve their understanding of a subject. With cooperative learning, each team member is responsible for not only what is being taught, but to help other team members learn the subject matter. I believe in this because it creates an atmosphere for achievement.

Selecting groups is the most important element for cooperative learning. There are two ways to select groups that I am very comfortable with. The first way is to select groups by pulling names out of a hat. Each student will have their name on a small slip of paper inside of a hat that I will select at random. Although this can bring a variety of different groups I will also be able to manipulate the groups how I want. If pulling names at random fails me by placing all of the low-ability or high-ability students together I will be able to manage the system in order to mix the groups together.

Another way of selecting groups that meets my wishes is by having a select number of colored construction paper. If there are five different colors of construction paper then there will be five different groups. I can also manipulate this selection by altering the ways in which the groups are selected through this. One time I may place students in groups by stating that there should be one of each color in a group. In another activity I can vary the selection by placing all of the students with the same color together.

I have seen these two ways of selecting groups work well in classes in the past. Students believe that this is a completely random way of selecting groups, but it also allows me to have some control over how the groups will be selected. As with other procedures I may permit my students to come up with other ways for selecting groups, but I believe this procedure I have discussed is highly effective.

November 18, 2008

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I want to take this time to tell you about how excited I am to have your child in my classroom. I am really looking forward to this year as I hope all of you are, as well. My main goal is to create a classroom community in which all students feel safe and nurtured. This cannot happen without the participation and responsibility of each and every individual.

As you will find out throughout the year I stress the importance of community. Each child is a very important member of our community and the responsibility will be placed on all of us (students, faculty, and administration) to make each child feel as though they belong. Our classroom motto is "Semper Fi." This is a Latin term that means "Always Faithful," and in our classroom each child should be faithful to me, one another, and to our school.

I encourage you all to discuss with your child daily events in our classroom. I will be in contact with you quite often and I hope that you always feel as if you are able to contact me about issue that you may want to discuss. I will be attaching a list of classroom rules, procedures, and grading policies. Remember that we must all work together to make this a successful year for your child!

Sincerely,

Mr. Mendenhall

Phone:

E-mail:

Mr. Mendenhall's Classroom

Rules

I try to make the classroom as Democratic as possible. Classroom will be discussed with the students and they will have an input about what they will be. Here is a list of classroom rules that I most often attend to:

- Follow Directions

- Complete Work On Time

- Respect Fellow Classmates

- Raise Your Hand And Wait To Be Called On

- Stay On Task

- Respect Other People's Property

- Always Do Your Best

Grading

The grading scale will be as follows:

Grade	Percentage
A+	100-97
A	96-94
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77

C	76-74
C-	73-70
D+	69-67
D	66-64
D-	63-60
F	59-0

Homework and class-work will make up 40% of the total grade. Tests and quizzes will accumulate for 30% of the grade. Class projects will total for 15% of the grade. The final 15% of the grade will be tallied by participation and how the child lives and works in the classroom community.

Procedures

Late Work & Absentees: I will count off 1 point for each day that an assignment is turned in late. This, of course, does not count for students that are absent. A student that is absent will receive the same number of days to complete assignments that were missed as the number of days he or she missed. For example, if a student missed two days in a row, then the homework will be due two days after he or she returns to school.

Beginning of Class: Students have responsibilities from the moment they enter their class. I encourage you to discuss with your child what these responsibilities are. If you have any questions about this please contact me.

Getting Attention: In order to gain the attention of the students I will simply state, "If you can hear me clap once, (Clap), if you can hear me clap twice, (Clap, Clap)." I will state this in a normal voice. I want my students to feel free to work together, though there will be times when I

need to gain their attention. It does not help to yell or talk over the students as this may encourage them to talk even louder.

Classroom Helpers: As I discussed, students have several responsibilities within the classroom community. These jobs can range from mail carriers to scrap monsters that clean the room. Once again I encourage you to discuss the job(s) that your child holds in our classroom.

 Selecting Groups: I have two ways in which I select groups. One way is by drawing names from hats. I also have students choose colored construction papers. These are two ways in which groups can be chosen at random so that the students gain experience from working with several different individuals.

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