

Classroom Management Plan

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When I think of my dream classroom, I envision a first grade room where the students are working cooperatively in an organized fashion, following the rules posted, and genuinely enjoying learning. I know this vision may not be realistic, but by documenting this vision, I hope to get closer to my goal. The purpose of a classroom management plan is to establish expectations for the students that help the day run more smoothly, creating maximum time for learning.

Philosophy of Classroom Management

My philosophy of classroom management is to create an environment where all students feel welcome and feel like they are being treated equally. My goal is to create fair classroom rules and to maintain consistency in my discipline. I know that every student may not feel like they are being treated fairly in every situation, but I will do my best to maintain a level of fairness. I want to always be encouraging to my students. I want to keep lines of communication open with my students and their parents. I plan to call home not only when the students misbehave, but also when they do something good in my class. I hope to create a level of trust with my students as well. They are going to be my children for 180 days, so I want them to feel like they can come to me with problems or questions. This also goes for the parents; I want them to feel like they can

come to me with questions about their child's schooling or questions they have about my teaching practices.

The following are my "Top Ten Beliefs/Practices." These are my classroom management beliefs and I have cited the theorists that support these beliefs. One aspect of the classroom that I feel is important is the class meeting. The class meeting is a weekly or daily meeting of students and teacher. It is a time for the students to talk about things that are bothering them or just things that they want to share with the class. This practice is supported by Nelsen, Lott, and Glenn. One advantage of the classroom meeting is that it builds the students' interpersonal skills (Charles 114). I like the concept of a class meeting because it creates a community in the classroom. The students can talk about their day or their weekend, or they may talk about something that is bothering them or something that they wish we would change in the classroom. Some days, I may ask a random question that the students will go around the room and answer. This practice gives me a chance to get to know my students on a personal level.

A second practice that I would like to carry into my classroom is a technique from Marlene and Lee Canter's style of assertive discipline that involves including the students in the rule writing process. When the teacher is writing the rules, he/she asks the students for input and rules that they think would be appropriate for the classroom and then compiles a list of these rules to post in the classroom. This form of rule-making establishes a type of responsibility in the students. I support this practice because it helps the students take ownership in their own behavior when they create the class rules. On the first day of school, I want to have a class meeting to brainstorm about classroom rules, in which the students will give their input on the rules they wish to see govern their

classroom. If it is a classroom of older students, I may also have the students establish the consequences for themselves when they break the rules.

A third belief that I support involving classroom management is using classroom structure to discourage misbehavior. This form of discipline is featured in the first skill cluster of the positive classroom model by Fred Jones (Charles 59). By structuring the classroom arrangement and assigning classroom chores a teacher can help to prevent misbehavior in the classroom. According to Jones, a teacher should provide generous walkways between student desks so that he/she can be constantly moving among the students (Charles 59). He/she should also assign classroom chores to the students so that they can feel a sense of ownership in the classroom. I want to use these methods in my classroom because the arrangement can help minimize behavior problems, leaving more time for learning, and the classroom chores can help my students develop responsibility. I want to be available to my students during work times, and in order to do this, I need to be able to walk around easily and have access to every desk. When structuring my arrangement, I will also take into account the students that should not sit by each other and students who may need to be positioned closer to my desk. As far as classroom chores, I want to be able to give every student the chance to do every job. I think this is a good component of the classroom management plan because it will hold my students accountable for something. They are never too young to have something for which to be responsible, no matter how small the task. Students, the younger ones especially, like to be able to assist the teacher; so if they know they are helping me out, they will be happy to do the job. I will address my procedures for the classroom chores in a later section.

A fourth principle teaching that I support is the concept of natural consequences, mentioned in Barbara Coloroso's Inner Discipline method (Charles 149). Natural consequences are not consequences a teacher imposes, but consequences that are going to happen naturally. For example, a student refuses to wear his coat outside to recess; he/she is going to be punished naturally by being cold, so why punish the student any other way? Although I believe in consequences, I feel that when a natural consequence presents itself, I do not need to provide another punishment, because, hopefully, the student will learn a lesson.

Another principle that I feel is important is the use of collaboration in my classroom. This involves students working together toward a common goal, and developing interpersonal relationships with one another. Marvin Marshall mentions the importance of collaboration to help with internal motivation (Charles 97). I like the concept of collaboration because it teaches cooperation, rather than competition. I don't want to stress competition with "winners" and "losers" in my classroom. I want the students to learn to work in teams and cooperate with other students. I will do this by grouping my students in pods and providing opportunities for group collaboration. This is important because cooperation is an important life skill that every student will need.

A sixth principle that I support is the idea of the "Big Three" presented by Kagan, Kyle, and Scott (Charles 187). This is in the Win-Win discipline model. This model states that if your curriculum, instruction, and management are in order, they can positively influence student behavior. This means that if you provide an interesting curriculum, use engaging lessons in your instruction, and provide clear expectations in your management plan, you should be able to avoid most discipline problems. I support

this belief because I plan to include engaging lessons in my everyday classroom. I want to be able to reach all learners, and I think that I can do this through hands-on and engaging lessons. I also support the practice of providing clear expectations to the students. I will explain more of this in my classroom rules and procedures section later. I think that if they know what is expected of them, then they will behave at that standard, to a degree.

Another aspect of the Win-Win discipline model that I support involves preventing attention-seeking behaviors from happening in the classroom. Most students act out because they are seeking attention from the teacher or their fellow classmates (Charles 189). I can prevent this behavior by making sure that the students know that I care about them. I want to give them the extra attention when I can, so that I can prevent them from acting out later. I plan to do this by giving each student personal attention at the beginning of the day. When the students walk in every morning, I will be waiting by the door, where I will greet them with a hug, a handshake, or a high five. It will be their choice as to which I give them. This is a way for them to know that each of them is special to me, therefore preventing attention-seeking behavior later in the day.

An additional concept of behavioral management that I want to include in my classroom is the idea of providing incentives and support for positive behavior. This idea comes from Budd Churchward's honor level system of discipline (Charles 173). I think that it is important to provide a supportive environment for my students. If they are having a bad day I want to encourage them to change their behavior and provide support for them to do so. I also want to provide incentives for positive behavior in my classroom. If the students have something to work for or look forward to, they will want

to behave in a manner that will allow them to obtain a reward. Some incentives that I will use in my classroom are a treasure box, a special party for whole class behavior, and student choice activities. I think that providing incentives for positive behavior and creating a supportive classroom environment will contribute to a positive classroom experience.

Another principle that I support for my classroom management plan is the concept of the classroom code of conduct. This philosophy is from Linda Albert's cooperative discipline model. The classroom code of conduct involves developing a code, teaching the code, and then enforcing the code of conduct (Charles 208). Developing the code involves envisioning your ideal classroom, asking for the students' vision, and then asking for the parents' input. To teach the code, a teacher must identify appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and make sure to involve parents. When enforcing the code, a teacher checks for understanding, then problem-solves when disagreements occur, also making sure to post the code of conduct. I support this model because it involves parents as well as students. I want to involve parents as much as I can in my classroom. I also like that this model requires posting the code of conduct. I plan to post my classroom expectations so that they are there as a reminder to my students to keep their behavior in check. I think that this model can be an effective component in my classroom management plan.

The four R's of consequences, also from Albert's cooperative discipline model, will be another component in my classroom management plan as well. The four R's consist of making the consequence related to the misbehavior, reasonable and proportional to the misbehavior, respectful to the student, and reliably enforced (Charles

213). I feel that all four of these components are important in classroom management and for maintaining a good relationship with students. Students will know that you still care about them when the consequence is enforced in a friendly but firm manner. I also like that this model stresses consistency in consequences and follow-through. That is one of the most important things that I want to keep in mind when I am disciplining in my classroom.

Procedures and Routines

One routine that I plan to create in my classroom involves getting the students' attention. I will use the "Gimme 5" procedure. This requires the students to give me two listening ears, two looking eyes, and one quiet mouth. I will use this procedure when we are in the classroom, but especially when we are lining up and walking down the hallway. This will be an important aspect of my classroom management because when the students are in the hallway, the action of each student reflects on the entire class, as well as on me as a teacher, and I want to project a good image of our classroom. In order for this to be effective, I will have to start out by reciting each part of the "Gimme 5" and hold my hand up. Eventually, I hope to just hold my hand up, and the students will know what they are to do. I will also create a poster with the components of the "Gimme 5" to display near the doorway of my classroom.

Pencil sharpening is another routine that I plan to establish with my class. Every morning when the students come in, they are going to sharpen two pencils. This will prevent students from going to the sharpener during the day and disturbing the normal activities of the day. I will keep a jar of sharpened pencils near the pencil sharpener, so

that if both of their pencils break, they can borrow one from the jar instead of sharpening a new one. They will have the opportunity to re-sharpen their pencils again the next morning.

Routines that begin the day are very important. These routines set the tone for the rest of the day. When the students come into the room, they are going to empty their book bags and turn in any work that they may have finished at home. Then they are going to pick up their papers for the current day, which will be located in a designated spot. After that, they will sharpen their two pencils, before they get started on their morning work. The assignment they are to work on will be posted on the board, so they know which paper to do. If they finish their morning work before we start the day, they will read a book until we start our morning meeting.

The community circle will take place at the end of the day; we will designate about 10 minutes for this activity. This ritual will serve as the class meeting that I talked about as one of my “Top Ten Beliefs/Practices.” The class will gather in a circle at the carpet area where I will have a jar of random questions, and the student of the week may pick out the question for the day. Questions may include: What is your dream pet? What famous person or athlete would you like to meet? What is your favorite food? If you were the teacher, what is one thing that you would change? After every student has answered a question, we may talk about a problem in our classroom or discuss anything that might be bothering the students. The students will know that they are expected to be responsible and listen to everyone’s comments during this time. This routine is important to my classroom management because it offers a sense of community to the students.

They will feel like they belong, and that they need to behave or be responsible citizens in order for our community to function as a whole.

Classroom helpers are going to be a major component of my classroom procedures and routines. Every week, the students will be assigned new jobs. They will be expected to fully complete each job, as needed, to the best of their abilities. The jobs will range in difficulty and frequency of duties, as to accommodate all skill levels, although I want every student to get to do every job throughout the school year. Some jobs may be to act as line leader, trash helper, paper passer-outer, pencil sharpener, board eraser, messenger, desk inspector, community question leader, etc. These jobs will help to establish a sense of responsibility in the students. They will be held accountable for their jobs, making sure that they get done everyday. I will have a bulletin board in the classroom that will have all of the jobs posted and who is in charge of what job for the week.

To alleviate a mess of papers on my desk everyday, I am going to create a procedure for turning in papers. There will be a homework tray in a designated spot—not on my desk—where the students should turn in their work every day. There will also be a folder for daily work that they get done throughout the day. They will know that whenever there is a paper to be turned in, they are to turn it into the tray. The papers that have no names on them will be posted on the front of my desk for students to review. I will not grade a paper unless it has a name on it. This procedure is important because it will teach the students responsibility. They are going to be in charge of their own work; I am not going to remind them to turn in their work—they will just know. Of course,

toward the beginning of the school year, I will remind the students, but after a month or so, the practice should become routine.

Implementation of Classroom Management Practices

My three main classroom rules will be as follows:

- Respect yourself.
- Respect others.
- Respect property.

These will be broad frames for the things the students are to do. They will understand the things that make up each rule. “Respect yourself” involves caring about your work and doing the best that you can do. “Respect others” involves keeping your hands to yourself, being respectful and polite to other classmates and teachers, and using kind words with others, not bringing them down. “Respect property” involves treating everyone’s property with respect, which includes my property, their classmates’ property, and their own property. They should never be destructive to anything, even if it is their own. Destroying or abusing their own property is still being disrespectful to their parents who worked hard to buy it for them. These are Miss Dague’s three main rules.

We will have our classroom meeting at the beginning of the year for the students to help establish some other rules that they feel will be important for the classroom. After the rules have been created, the students will all sign a contract stating that they know and understand the rules. We will post the contract in the classroom to remind them of their promise to the class.

To monitor the student's behavior I will use a star system. Every student will have their own star, which will be magnetic. This will be set up on a filing cabinet or something magnetic, which will be positioned behind my desk as a way of keeping each student's personal business private. It is not the other students' business to be monitoring who might be getting in trouble. If a student is misbehaving, I will say, "Go move your star," and they will recognize this as a form of reprimand. At the beginning of the day, all the stars will be on the top, because they are my "shining stars." There will be four levels to the system. At the top is the safe level, where they are "shining"; the next level down is a warning; if the student moves to the third level, they will need to have a talk with me about their behavior and they will get a check; and if they reach the bottom level, they are a "falling star," and I will make a call home to the parent and possibly have the student talk with the principal. I will restart everyone's stars on "shining" every morning. If a student gets three checks in one week, which means he/she falls to the third level at least three times, there will be a call home. If a student has a consistent behavior problem, but never makes it to the bottom level I may still have them talk with the principal. There will be incentives to not moving their stars. Students who go all week without moving their star may choose something out of my prize box. For some students, there will also be rewards for improvement in behavior. I will send a letter home to parents at the beginning of the year explaining my classroom rules, as well as my star discipline system. The parents will be required to sign and return a sheet saying that they have read the rules.

To keep the student's attention during my lessons, I am going to use as many hands on methods and discovery tools as I can. These aids will help to keep their

attention and prevent misbehavior. I will also use student involvement in my lessons and visual models. These will appeal to the visual and hands-on learners, as well as keep the attention of all students.

In order to support the preventative method in my classroom, I am going to have to start with removing all things that may be a distraction to students and, therefore, might encourage misbehavior. This may include moving a student away from another student, having them clear their desks before instruction, or closing the door to a noisy hallway. I also need to plan engaging lessons, as I mentioned earlier, to keep their attention and prevent misbehavior.

I hope that my classroom management plan is, above all, supportive. I want the students to think that I am a friendly face that they can come to when they have a problem. I want to have a smooth-running classroom, without being a “mean teacher.” I am not afraid of that title, but I know that it is possible to have good classroom management and order without coming to that point. I hope to be encouraging and supportive of their needs, and in return, they support my classroom management by respecting the rules.

One very important aspect of the corrective section is being consistent and following through with consequences. I want to ensure that I am consistent, so that each student will feel as if they are being treated fairly. When it comes to correcting the students, I want to do it in an unthreatening, calm tone of voice. I don't want to crush their spirits or instill negative feelings about school or teachers within them, but I also want to get the message across clearly, so that we will not have to have the conversation again.

By looking to my philosophy of teaching, using the ideas of theorists, and practicing the rules and procedures listed in this classroom management plan, I hope to provide my students with the best possible environment for learning.

Bibliography

Charles, C.M. *Building Classroom Discipline*. Boston: Pearson Education, Inc. 2005.

November 27, 2006

Dear Parents,

Welcome to 1st grade! My name is Miss Kiley Dague, and I am so excited to have your little learner in my classroom this year! I am sending this letter home to explain my classroom rules and consequences, which I have already reviewed with the students. I started out by giving them my three basic rules, listed below. They were also given the opportunity to create some rules of their own. The students signed a contract with me committing to these rules.

My three main rules are:

- **Respect yourself.**
- **Respect others.**
- **Respect property.**

I explained each of these rules to the students, and they understood what is expected of them.

In my classroom I use a star system. Every student has their own star. At the beginning of the day, all stars will be at the top level, as my “shining stars.” If a student misbehaves, however, they will be asked to move their star. There will be four levels to the system.

- **Top Level = “Shining”**
- **Second Level = Warning**
- **Third Level = Talk with me and a check mark in my record.**
- **Last Level = “Falling Star” A talk with the principal.**

I restart everyone’s stars on “shining” every morning, but if a student gets three checks in one week, I will call home. If a student is consistently required to move their star from the top level, even though they may not make it to the bottom level, I may still be required to have them talk with the principal. There will be incentives for not moving their stars. A student who goes all week without moving his/her star may choose something out of my prize box. For some students, there will also be rewards for improvement in behavior.

I hope to get to know all of you this year, as I will be calling home periodically to inform you of your student’s status. If you have any questions about my discipline plan or my classroom procedures, please feel free to call me at 555-1234 or e-mail me at KBDague@manchester.edu. After reading about my classroom rules and consequences, please sign and return the attached sheet. You may keep this sheet for reference.

Sincerely,

Miss Dague

I have read Miss Dague's classroom rules and consequences.

Signature _____

Date _____