Classroom Management Plan

The topic of classroom discipline has been studied for years by educators, theorists, and psychologists. C.M. Charles has defined discipline as “what teachers do to help students conduct themselves appropriately in class” (293). Teachers need to implement a thorough classroom management plan in order to maintain control over the discipline of their students. The plan should include tactics for the three types of discipline: preventive, supportive, and corrective.

A major component in developing a successful classroom management plan is establishing an environment that prevents discipline from occurring. Although this area of management is many times overlooked, preventive discipline is the foundation of maintaining order within the classroom. Some areas that need to be addressed to accomplish this task include the classroom environment, the students, and the instruction.

Providing a positive and safe classroom environment is essential. Teachers must maintain a positive attitude and demeanor when interacting with students. This style of teaching is outlined in Lee and Marlene’s Discipline plan entitled *Assertive Discipline*. According to the Canters, “The assertive teacher is able to maintain a positive, caring, and productive climate in the classroom. A climate of care and support produces the climate for learning” (Tom Allen). The teacher serves as a model for the students, so that when they observe the teacher being positive, then they in turn will start displaying a positive attitude. The teacher should also create a community of learners within the environment. The students should feel as though they are working together as a team to accomplish the tasks
One way Fred Jones suggests to help the children see the class as a community is to implement classroom jobs (Charles 59). The teacher will have a chart displaying the students’ different responsibilities. Every morning the teacher will rotate which students are in charge of the particular tasks. Some of the jobs might include watering plants, erasing chalkboard, feeding class pets, paper passer-outer, etc. Although not every child will have a job every day, the experience of being needed every few days helps build the child’s self-worth.

Along with providing a positive environment, each student should feel important to the quality of the classroom. Theorist Rudolf Dreikurs believed students have the primary need to belong to a group as well as feel they have value through their contributions in the classroom (Jones and Shindler). The child needs to feel that his/her presence and efforts in the class are necessary for the success of the class. Also, the classroom environment should be established in such a way that the students feel safe to share their ideas with confidence to their peers. A student’s ideas should never be criticized by the teacher or other students as this will only damage the student’s self-esteem. The Canters also emphasize the importance of the teacher implementing one-on-one time with each student as much as possible and knowing some of the child’s interests (Charles 41). Greeting each child individually in the morning is one way to ensure that the teacher has acknowledged each child every day.

Another important aspect for preventive discipline is the instruction time. Students need to be engaged through interactive activities. There should also be a flow from one activity to the next, without allowing much wasted “down time.” Fred Jones firmly
believes, “teachers in typical classrooms lose approximately 50 percent of their teaching
time because students are off task or otherwise disrupting learning” (Charles 57). One way
for teachers to avoid this problem is to have a bank of time-fillers at hand to use when
needed. When children are bored and not interested in the material of the lesson, then they
will begin to misbehave. The goal is to help the students become so excited about the topics
being covered that they will not have time to think about misbehaving.

Although preventive discipline is the key to a successful management plan,
sometimes students need to simply be reminded to stay on task through supportive
discipline strategies. The teacher needs to discover which of these strategies best affects
the child in a positive manner. Some of the ways to remind students might be to move
closer to the student, say the students’ name, or give a stern look. Occasionally, the lesson
or activity may be the cause of misbehavior. Therefore, the teacher must be flexible enough
to modify the activity during instruction when needed.

Even though a discipline plan may be organized well, there will be times when
corrective discipline may need to be executed. In this process, it is important not to use
punishment, but instead consequences that directly correlate to the misbehavior. The
difference is in how the discipline is administered to the child. For example, a teacher that
is punishing a child might say, “You didn’t do your homework, so you have to stay-in for
recess.” A better response might be, “Since you have not completed your homework
assignment, you have chosen to finish your work during recess.” Dreikurs is an advocate
for logical consequences, formulated jointly by the teacher and students, to be
implemented in the classroom rather than punishment (Charles 31-32).

Based on these theories for discipline, I have created my classroom management
plan. On the first day of school, I will ask my students to assist me in creating the discipline plan. I will explain to the class that it takes both my effort as well as their efforts in order to ensure success for the year. After hearing the students’ ideas on how they should behave, I will write a list of classroom rules based on their discussion. The students will have a chance to make any changes to the plan, and then they will need to agree to follow the plan. The finalized plan will be put in an area of the room that is visible to all of the students. By allowing the students to develop their classroom management plan, the students are more willing to follow the rules, because they have some ownership in the process. I believe this collaborative style of discipline works most effectively on the upper elementary grades. They have experienced several classrooms, and so they understand what is needed to have a successful class.

Students will receive both positive and negative consequences in accordance with their behavior. The most common type of positive consequence I will give to the students is praise. This could be present in a number of ways including smiles, pats on the back, high fives, and stating out loud how pleased I am with the behavior. I will administer negative consequences only after I have first attempted to stop the behavior by using some of the supportive discipline ideas listed previously. After this does not help, I will administer a discipline hierarchy, which will also be formulated by a classroom discussion about consequences to misbehavior. A typical example from students is as follows: 1) give the student a time-out to recollect themselves 2) conference with the student to try to find a way to fix the problem 3) contact parents to see if they could help the situation.

Just as teachers must continually reflect on their instruction and modify their lesson plans, I must continue to analyze my classroom management plan and make necessary
changes. As I am introduced to more ideas from successful discipline plans, my attitudes and opinions of particular management issues may change. Also, the experience I gain from teaching numerous classrooms of different types of students will enable me to develop a more effective management plan for my students.
November 30, 2005

Hello Parents!

First, I want to welcome your child and you to an exciting year in the 4th grade! I am excited about the opportunity to get to know you and your child throughout this year! I want to keep you informed about your child’s class so that you can be actively involved in your child’s education.

On the first day of school, I will have a discussion with the class about discipline. We will talk about what behavior is needed to create a successful classroom. At this age, I believe fourth graders are responsible enough to realize what should be expected of them. Through the ideas mentioned in the discussion, I will create the classroom rules and consequences. I will then ask the students if anyone would like to change or add any rules written on our list. Once everyone agrees to follow the rules we have created, I will place the rules in an area that is visible. By allowing the students to be involved in establishing the rules of the classroom, they will have more ownership in the process, and therefore will be more willing to comply to the rules.

Once our class has created the rules, I will send you a copy of them and the consequences, both positive and negative. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. My phone number is 982-5511 and my e-mail is TAMaple@manchester.edu.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Maple
Works Cited

