One of the most important parts of teaching is implementing a discipline plan that will allow for a successful year. If a teacher is able to manage his or her classroom effectively, it will benefit both the teacher and the students. In an environment where the students and teacher work together, more can be accomplished everyday, especially if time is not spent correcting students and keeping them on task. Stopping class to keep others on track is not fair to the students who are excited about the class and want to spend time working on projects. I try to keep this in mind when I think about how my class will run on a daily basis.

In my classroom, I will only hold my students accountable for four rules. Each rule is broad so that it covers multiple areas without having to be specific. The fewer the number of rules I have, the easier it will be for my students to remember all of them. The first rule I have is being dependable. This includes getting homework completed and turned in on time, not being tardy to class, not missing numerous days, acting mature and not wasting materials. If the students can be counted on, then the class will run much smoother. The second rule is being considerate. Students should respect others, their teachers, and themselves. They also need to be considerate of other student’s artwork and creative ideas. Nobody wants to have others touching their artwork and possibly ruining it if they do not have permission. Furthermore, artwork can also be interpreted in many ways, so I want all of my students to feel comfortable when they are giving their opinions on various styles and pieces. It is also common courtesy not to speak while
others are speaking. Kids learn this at an early age and should have mastered it by the
time they reach high school. The classroom and all of the items and materials in it need
to be respected as well. Materials need to be returned to the appropriate area and the
room needs to be cleaned at the end of every class. If this does not happen, then the
students will have limited freedom in their choice of materials to work with or will be
limited with the amount that they get to use. The third rule is to be flexible. I want all of
my students to begin stepping out of their comfort zones and trying new things. I want
them to look at artwork that they may not like and appreciate it on various levels. They
also need to be flexible, because sometimes things arise that is out of anyone’s control
and must be dealt with. They need to realize that plans change and that it is part of life.
The final rule I have is being safe. In an art room, there are many materials and tools that
can be harmful or create hazardous problems. This rule refers to the first two about being
considerate and dependable, but is important enough that it needs to be addressed.
Students cannot be horsing around when there are knives and toxic materials around. I
feel that having a small number of rules that are broad and encompass many ideas will
make it easier for my students remember what appropriate behavior is for my classroom.

I plan on laying the groundwork for the rules, but I also want to involve the
students to some extent. For example, I plan to list the four rules on the board and have
the class as a whole discuss examples of the types of things that fall under each rule. I
will have them discuss things that demonstrate the rule and those things that break the
rule. If there are some items that they do not mention that I want to be sure to cover, I
will lead them to think about them. If students feel as though they have a say in the rules,
they will be more willing to agree to them (Glasser).
In my classroom there will be consequences, both positive and negative, depending on how well they follow the classroom rules. A main part of art is experimenting with new materials and expressing ideas in a creative manner without too many restrictions. If students are doing what they are told, and behaving like mature young adults, then I can reward this behavior. I would allow them to alter projects in ways that cater to their taste and style better. I would also allow them more freedom in the materials they want to use and even experiment with mixing multiple media. If I have students who continuously do not follow instructions or if they are just wasting time, I will be more restrictive and tell them exactly what I need out of them. For students who make a habit of this, I would hope to have the support of their parents and school administrators to handle the situation. There is nothing I dislike more than students who waste class time, because they cannot handle themselves (Kagan, Kyle, Scott).

I plan on making a copy of all the rules and the appropriate actions on hand and available for anyone who would like to see them. This includes the administrators and parents. I also plan to have a copy for each student, which they will have to sign if they agree to follow them. This way when they break them I will pull their contract out and remind them of their agreement. If they do not agree to the contract then we will have to have a meeting and discuss what parts they do not agree with and make it suitable for both of us. They are old enough to be responsible for their own behavior and should be held accountable for their actions.

I hope to create a relaxed, comfortable, safe, and enjoyable atmosphere in my classroom. William Glasser’s theories that students’ basic needs must be met before
anything else can happen are important to remember. There are five basic needs that he discusses which includes survival, belonging, power, fun, and freedom. I want my students to feel safe and free from personal threats, while leading them in discussions that concern the class as a whole. I want to encourage my students to be part of the decision making process by deciding which topics they would like to study and projects they would like to do. If they have a say in the things they do, then they should enjoy them and be engaged.

At the beginning of the class during introductions, I hope to share with my students what I am all about. I want to tell them who I am and what I stand for as well as what I will and will not expect of them. I will tell them that I want the class to be one which they look forward to coming to and exploring their creative ideas. All I will ask is that they do their best in everything and always try something new. I will not expect masterpieces, but rather improvements in their work. I do not expect them to sit quietly and keep to themselves, because most artwork can not be done sitting at a desk. They will be up and moving around and interacting with others to develop ideas. (Glasser)

As far as my teaching style, I plan on being a facilitator and not a drill sergeant. My role in the classroom is to direct their course and lead them to new ideas, and ways of thinking, not to drill information into them. I want to encourage them to identify what they want to learn. I also want to involve them in their evaluations. After each project I plan on having a rubric set up, so that they can evaluate themselves, before I do. Many times students are harder on themselves than anyone else. If they begin to find things they feel they need to work on then they will do it themselves without being told (Glasser).
In order to make everything happen and be successful I will need support. Support from both the student and his or her parents. If a student is unable to control his or her behavior and I should have to enforce consequences, I will need support from the parents to make sure their child acts appropriately. However, if a student should become a problem and actions must be taken, I plan on discussing with the student why they are acting the way they are and how their attitude can be changed. If the student has a say in their discipline they will hopefully be more cooperative. (Kagan, Scott, Kyle)

As far as incentives are concerned, I hope to use them to entice students to behave maturely. I have mentioned before that if students prove to me that they are mature and responsible, I will allow them more freedom in the projects they do and the materials they are allowed to use. I also hope to bring things into the classroom that makes the environment more comfortable. For example, if they are able to keep the noise level at a reasonable level, then I will have a stereo that they can use to listen to the radio or play appropriate CD’s.

My discipline plan is based solely the student’s behavior. If they are not able to control themselves and conduct themselves in responsible and appropriate manners, then I will be tougher on them. However, I hope that they will be able to act maturely so that the class will be enjoyable and fun for everyone involved. I don’t want to have to stay on top of everyone and make sure they are constantly doing something, but I will if necessary. I want to give them the freedom and opportunity to do things that appeal to them so that they are able to get the most out of the time that we will spend together.