

Discipline Paper

When creating a discipline plan that I will incorporate in my own classroom, the first challenge is creating an idea of what I believe misbehavior is. In the book, *Building Classroom Discipline*, misbehavior is considered, “a behavior that is inappropriate for the setting or situation in which it occurs” (Charles 3). As an elementary teacher, I believe that misbehavior is any behavior that disrupts the learning environment in my classroom. This definition covers a very broad area of the classroom that I will have to face as a teacher. As a reaction to misbehavior in the classroom I will have to implement discipline, which will be used as a tool to get students to act in a way that is acceptable and appropriate in my classroom. It is through this discipline plan that I will discuss how I expect to react and deal with these situations. This plan was created to fit a fourth or fifth grade level.

Some discipline problems I may need to address include: tardiness, non-attendance, non-participation, not being prepared for class, and not being respectful. These rules are the basic rules that I will have as a teacher, even though there will be room for additional rules set by the students on the first day of class. Along with my class rules, I will have a policy about students misbehaving in the classroom; I will write their name on a slip of paper and put it into their slot. After five pieces of paper are in their slot, a note will be sent home to the student’s parents and the principal to inform them of what has been going on inside my classroom. The students will receive a slip when they have been tardy more than twice, have failed to turn in homework or turned in late

homework assignments, are not prepared for class more than twice a month, are not participating in class and/or are not being respectful of the teacher, other student's and their belongings.

Many schools already have set rules about tardiness, but in my classroom, the students are expected to be seated at their desk when the bell rings. If this rule is not followed once, I will remind them to be seated at their desk when the bell rings. The second time, I will warn them that they need to be seated at their desk when the bell rings. If the behavior continues day after day, then I will write their name on a slip of paper for each time it occurs following the warning. If the student is constantly late, for an entire week, the student will be sent to the principal's office and a note will be sent home to the parents. By taking these steps, the student will have no excuse to say that they did not understand the rule because they had many chances before I took action to stop the behavior. This method also shows the student how to be responsible for themselves and for their actions.

Attendance is an area that most schools usually take responsibility of recording when the students are absent and the reason why the student is missing school. For students in my classroom, I will expect they make up their work in an appropriate amount of time determined by the teacher and student. In most elementary schools, the parents can request their child's homework given on the day they missed. I will expect the student to come to me before or after school or during their first recess for me to explain the assignments and determine when their assignment will be due. If the parents do not request their child's homework, I expect the student to come to me and ask for their assignments. The same procedure will happen as if their parents did ask for the

homework. All missed assignments, quizzes and tests for an absence will be made up but the responsibility lies on the student. (By taking this action, I am letting the student take responsibility for missing class and not letting them rely on me to create a positive environment for them missing a day of school.) I think it is important as a teacher to be understanding if a student misses school for a medical reason or a family emergency and to allow them to make up their missed work.

Participation is important in the classroom for all students, but I understand that not all students feel comfortable talking in front of people, groups, etc. This would be my most lenient rule in the classroom, accounting for about five percent of the student's overall grade. Although I do not expect every student to be involved in everything we do, I will strive to get everyone involved and actively participating as much as I can. In order to accomplish active participation, I will use a variety of techniques and lesson plans to get the students involved. With the different levels of students in my class, I will differentiate the work I give to the students allowing each student to work at their level. The importance for this is to have everyone's attention during class, leaving less space for a student to be disruptive.

Students are expected to be prepared for class everyday with all assignments completed and materials read. When the students arrive in my classroom, they are expected to put their books, paper, pencils and other materials in their desk, backpack in the storage location, their homework in the homework tray and turn in notes or permission slips to the teacher everyday. When this is completed they will be expected to do the morning work which will be written on the chalkboard every morning. Morning work will include: finishing up any work from the day before, review work, and reading

library books or books brought from home. This rule encourages students to think for themselves and gain a sense of organization.

“Good teachers realize that to a very large extent they themselves create the climate in their classrooms” (NEA 1997). This quote relates to the type of elementary teacher that I plan to become in the future. It is the teacher’s responsibility to create a very positive and enriching learning environment for the students. By having a positive learning environment, I would want my students to act how I would be demonstrating through my relationships with them. I believe the best way for students to learn is through the actions of others. I will use this idea when implementing my classroom discipline plan by modeling good behavior and respect for each student. It is important for me, as the teacher, to discuss with my students and explain to them how they should behave in my classroom.

As an elementary teacher, it is my job to prepare my students for the future, whether it is middle school or the next grade level. The most important rule that I will incorporate in my classroom is being respectful to adults, other students and their belongings. In an elementary classroom, it is common to find a student who does not realize that they are being disrespectful. As the teacher, it is important to look at the source of the student’s actions. Instead of punishing the student right away when they do not obey the rule of being disrespectful, I will look at the reason why the student has acted in they way they have. The action may be a reflection of their home life, the friends they hang around with, or maybe something they are going through outside of school. This procedure hinges on how well I as a teacher get to know my students. Once I can diagnose the problem, I can quickly figure out a plan to address the misbehavior. A

possible way to address the misbehavior is having a one on one session with the student after school to discuss why they are being talked to. If the situation involves two students, I may sit them down and have them talk out why they are not respecting each other. “Often a discussion can be enough to help students become aware of the need to make changes” (Nelson, Lott, Glenn 54).

Positive reinforcements will be given daily, weekly and monthly within my classroom. For students who complete their work daily and accurately, I will put a sticker on their paper or draw a smiley face. Students, who are actively participating, sitting at their desk and not disturbing others, will be complimented on a job well done. At the end of each week, students who have not broken a rule will receive a blue slip to put in their slot to indicate a great week. If the whole class has had a good week, “preferred activity time will be allocated for activities such as learning games and enrichment activities that can serve as incentives” (Charles 63). Preferred activity time will also be used as a positive reinforcement because the students have to earn it by showing responsibility and good behavior within the classroom. Also notes will be sent home to parents to indicate good behavior and comment on how well they are doing in the classroom.

I plan on incorporating Fred Jones’s approach, “Say, See, Do Teaching” in my daily classroom routine. According to Jones, “Say, See, Do Teaching” is defined as the teacher says or does, the students see, and the students do something with the input” (Charles 61). This approach along with visuals reduces the amount of misbehavior because the students are kept busy while the teacher circulates and interacts with students while they are working. This leaves little time for misbehavior, goofing around or daydreaming.

My classroom discipline plan will be explained to the students on the very first day of class along with a letter to the parents. The parents will have contact information in order to have access for any questions or concerns they may have with my discipline plan or concerns throughout the school year. Also, the parents will have the opportunity to meet with me at parent teacher conferences to discuss any problems that they have noticed or that I have seen in the classroom. The administrators of my school will receive a copy of my discipline plan and an explanation of the rules.

As a new teacher, I believe it is important to determine when to be forceful and when to back down when dealing with discipline. Through observations and remembering back to my school days, I can recall many times when a teacher could have told the student to stop misbehaving and everything would have been fine. The teacher could have talked to the student during a recess or restroom break to explain to them what they were doing wrong. Instead, they chose to make a big spectacle out of the situation and the student received what they wanted which is attention. Most cases of misbehavior deal with the student wanting attention from peers and in order to gain that they disobey the teacher or classroom rules.

Being consistent with my rules and discipline plan is another important part of the classroom environment. There are many times teachers, especially first year teachers, fall into a trap when they let some incidents slide and others not. As a new teacher, I believe the best plan is to try a way and if it works, continue to use it consistently throughout the year. If the plan does not work, be flexible and know that changes can be made to meet the needs of the students or the situation. Discipline is not always a negative situation but I see it as solving a problem to help a student learn a lesson in the long run. Dwelling on

the discipline plan on the first day of school is not as important as balancing it with incentives that the students will have the opportunity to achieve. Incentives include bonus points given on homework, good behavior slips to put into their slot. These incentives can lead to being prepared and doing all work which leads to having good grades to show parents, and special rewards for perfect attendance. Most students want to succeed in school but lack the motivation. Therefore as the teacher, we need to encourage students to do their best and by giving little incentives along the way will help the students realize that they can succeed.

Dear Parents,

I am happy to be writing to you as your student's teacher. I would like to welcome you and your student to the new school year. I plan on having a great year with the students while they learn new and exciting information. I would like to inform you about the classroom rules that I will be implementing this year. I have reviewed these with the students on the first day of school as well. I am confident that each and every student will succeed in my class. The students will have the decision on whether they follow the classroom rules or not. The rules include: be seated at their desk when the bell rings, complete morning work, attend school unless there is a medical or family emergency, participate in class, be prepared for class, and be respectful of the teacher, other students and their belongings. I expect all the students in my class to abide by all of these rules. Also, I hope that you as the parent will become involved with your student and their education throughout the year by simply asking them how school was, what they are doing in class, or what they learned. I also encourage you to become actively involved in the classroom by volunteering for field trips, staying in contact with me, or visiting the classroom to see how and what the students are learning. An important part of school is letting your student know how much you care about their education. I plan to send out monthly letters during the year to update you on what we are doing in the class and how your children are doing. I would encourage you to email, write or call me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Miss Myers

Works Cited

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Nelson, Lynn Lott, and Stephen Glenn. Postive Discipline in the Classroom. Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing, 1993.