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Discipline Paper
October 17, 2005

Multiple studies have been conducted over the years to find the best techniques to manage a classroom. Consequently, there are many different views as to what exactly is the best way. Unfortunately no theorist has ever produced a complete classroom management system that covers every dynamic. Theorists' studies have resulted in many effective strategies for managing a classroom. I have compiled strategies from various theorists in order to create my own classroom management system.

Every student of mine will be different and therefore each one will have their own needs. I firmly believe that I need to meet my children's needs for them to be successful. A significant aspect of my classroom management will be my responsibility of finding my students' needs and meeting them. I feel this is the first step to my classroom management. I realize that not every rule or consequence will work for every student and I need to make changes as I see fit. I will listen to my students and be there for them. I will let them know I care about them as individuals. I will support them and show that I care about and value their education. I will have confidence in them and give them responsibility that will ultimately promote a positive self concept and self-esteem. Through this my intent is for them to value their own education, take responsibility, and want to be a part of the classroom community that I offer.

My classroom management will center around the idea that we are a community and each person is important to the success of the community. The procedures for my third grade class will be set up prior to the school year either by me or by the third grade teachers. There will be procedures for the morning, hallway, bathroom, circle time,

lining up, and direct instruction. These procedures will be typed and the children will receive them on the first day of school in a folder that they will keep in their desk at all times. Morning procedures will be to take their belongings out of their bag and hang their bag in a designated area, move their lunch stick, sharpen two pencils, go to the bathroom, and do morning work. Hall procedures would include walking in a single file line with their mouths closed and hands at their side. Each procedure will include specific instructions like the examples above.

The folder will also contain the lifelong guidelines that we will follow in our room. These are truth, active listening, personal best, no put downs, and trust. We will talk about these guidelines, how we can use them in our class, and how they will help our community succeed. Positive characteristics to live by such as initiative, perseverance, problem solving, responsibility, friendship, sense of humor, organization, common sense, effort, caring, flexibility, cooperation, courage, integrity, patience, and curiosity will also be in their folder. During the first week of school we will practice the procedures and lifelong guidelines. We will also point out when we or others use one of the positive characteristics.

Establishing how I expect the students to act will promote a structured environment. However, other than procedures and how to act toward others, the students will help to develop the rules and responsibilities for the community. On the first day we will have a class discussion to determine appropriate rules for our community. The students will give suggestions and I will write these on the board. Then we will come up with three to five rules that are broad and incorporate the ideas from the students. These will be typed and added to their folders. The first day the students will take these folders

home and discuss them with their parents. Along with a parent letter, there will be a sheet for the parents and students to sign saying they have read and agree to the rules, procedures, lifelong guidelines, and positive characteristics of our community. The students will also sign a contract saying they agree to follow the rules and procedures and to live by the lifelong guidelines and positive characteristics.

The students will also be establishing jobs and responsibilities that they will have throughout the year. I will explain to the students that there are important jobs in our community. I will explain that I have a list of jobs that will be done each day by the students. We will switch names each week and each student will complete that job for the week. The jobs include passing out papers, turning on and off lights, calling groups to line up, line leaders, and many others. During our discussion on rules, the students will be able to give suggestions for other jobs that they think are necessary. I will have a hanging pocket organizer that will include the jobs and students' names that can be moved each week.

The pocket organizer will be hung on the wall and visible to students as well as our classroom rules, procedures, lifelong guidelines, and positive characteristics. The student contracts will also be hung on the wall. The contracts can be used as a reminder when a student misbehaves. If the student only needs a warning, I can remind the student that they helped make the rules and then agreed to follow them by pointing out their contract. Churchward believes having the rules displayed acts as a verbal reminder for the student. You can simply ask the student what they are supposed to be doing, and having the rules displayed allows the student to quickly answer your question and then proceed to follow the rules. (173)

A verbal warning would be the first consequence in my discipline policy. If the student breaks a rule or does not follow a procedure, I will verbally remind them that they helped make the rules and agreed to follow them as well as the procedures. I can easily point to the contract that they signed to show them that they did agree to follow the rules. I will tell the student that this is their verbal warning and the next time it happens they will be required to sign the book. I will have a three ring binder with a section for each child. In each section there will be slips of paper where the student has to write the rule or procedure they did not follow, how this negatively affects our community, and what they will do next time to correct it. They will be required to fill out the slip and sign it if the misbehavior occurs after the verbal warning.

The students will also have three sticks that will be used if the misbehavior continues. The students will have a total of 15 points each week. They start with three sticks each day, and after the verbal warning and signing the book, they will have to pull sticks if they misbehave. I will keep track of their points and at the end of the week the students will receive rewards for their points. We will have a token economy where the students can choose prizes depending on the number of points they have for the week. This system will be used as individual incentives for the students. Bos and Vaughn say “the effectiveness of a reinforcement program depends on selecting reinforcers that actually do reinforce” (36). Therefore, I will make the rewards appealing to the students to ensure curiosity and bring about positive behavior, yet are educational and valuable to the students.

A group incentive will be PAT, preferred activity times. The students can earn or lose minutes for preferred activities depending on their behavior as a group. Jones says

“teachers must make sure that students want the activity, that they earn the activity by showing responsibility, and that the teacher can live with the PAT” (63). Each morning the students can earn two minutes if they correctly complete morning procedures. Then as the day goes on they have more opportunities to earn minutes as they show responsibility. They can also lose PAT time if the class, as a whole, is not following rules or procedures.

Many theorists believe that many teachers waste time each morning while taking care of technicalities. This time takes away from learning and is a recipe for discipline problems. Wong says “your first priority is not to take roll; it is to get the students to work immediately” (121). Each morning the students will have seatwork to do. They will have a half sheet with grammar on one side, and math on the other. Immediately after finishing morning procedures the students will be required to do their seatwork. Then, first thing, we will go over the answers and I will collect it for a grade, so the students see the value and importance of the assignment.

Through making my classroom a community, I will promote responsibility. I will give students responsibilities in the classroom and make them responsible for their own behavior. I will provide the former positive consequences for students. Marshal states, “the best way to help students conduct themselves properly is to encourage them to accept personal responsibility for their behavior” (96). I will have negative consequences as well. A verbal warning will not produce a negative consequence. But if the student has to write in the book more than three times in one week, the fourth time will result in the student writing the procedure or rule they are breaking a certain number of times. This will happen during the student’s recess that day. If the student is not turning in

homework they will be required to stay in for recess to do their homework, or come in before or stay after school. If the student ends up with less than five points for the week the student will have to call home on Friday. In the case of misbehavior occurring continuously, a note will be sent home requesting a meeting with the parents.

These negative consequences will be used when misbehavior occurs or rules or procedures are broken. However, the main focus of my classroom will be a positive community. There will be many incentives to behave correctly. I will provide the students with responsibility and allow them to help make decisions in the class. I will also let them know that if they are responsible enough to help make decisions, then they are responsible enough to accept the consequences if they do choose to misbehave. I will work on establishing relationships with my students. I feel setting up my classroom with precise procedures and rules will create a structured setting. Just as important as structure, will be the community we create by all living by the lifelong guidelines and positive characteristics.

Works Cited

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