

Classroom Management Plan

Jeff Bauman
Classroom Management
EDUC 360
October 22, 2006

Descriptive Statement

Imagine a large classroom with every decoration possible, a group of teachers that is excited and welcoming, 25 students who are ready to learn and are excited about being at school, and not the first discipline problem. Sounds good to me, but is it a reality? I think the scenario above can be a reality with the advanced detailed preparation of the teacher. Every August a teacher's head is full of ideas as they enter his or her classroom. They are wondering how to form engaging lessons or how to decorate their classroom. These are very important factors for a successful classroom; however, another factor that should be thought about in detail is the classroom management or discipline plan. This includes everything that occurs during the progression of a school day. For example, an effective discipline/management plan needs to include what happens in the classroom, in the hallways, in the bathroom, and even on field trips. If a teacher wants to have a successful classroom this is a step that can not be ignored. As I finish my training in elementary education, I have been thinking about my classroom rules, morning procedures, hallway procedures, bathroom procedures, homework procedures, consequences for not following these procedures, and positive rewards for those who do follow them. Also, I think it is important to establish a field trip procedure and have this in place before the students step foot in the classroom the first time.

Philosophy of Classroom Management

Every teacher has his or her own beliefs of how to "control" their students so they have "the perfect classroom." I am like many other teachers and I also have my own idea of how to manage my classroom. This idea that I have comes from the studies of many

theorists, who have studied children and their behaviors to formulate an opinion and a method of controlling the unwanted behaviors.

I will start with a theorist named Fred Jones. Jones believes in a positive classroom discipline plan. He has his plan broken down into four clusters, two of which I really like. Cluster one is classroom structure, which is used to discourage misbehavior. According to Jones, room arrangement is key. He likes to minimize the physical distance between the teacher and the students. This allows the teacher to “work the crowd.” I would like to use a Jones style of classroom arrangement in my classroom design. I have found that I like to move about the room while I teach, which allows me to be closer to my students and be on a conversational level of teaching versus a lecture level. Jones’s interior loop classroom design is my personal choice for a classroom design. Another aspect of Jones’s theory that I really like is his responsibility training through incentives, which are found in his cluster number four. I think we often look too closely at those students who misbehave and ignore those who behave properly. Jones’s incentive systems give teachers an opportunity to not only discipline those who do wrong but reward those who behave properly.

The next theorist I am implementing in my classroom discipline plan is Barbara Coloroso. Coloroso’s philosophy of “inner discipline” really lines up with my personal beliefs. One piece of Coloroso’s plan that I really agree with is the central focus of her plan. This focus is helping students make their own decisions and showing them how to take responsibility for those choices. I feel this idea of classroom self-discipline by the students provides an environment that supports students as they learn how to make quality decisions for themselves. This is especially important to those students who are

in upper elementary grades. These students are preparing to move to a new style of teaching as they enter middle school. In this environment they are allowed to make more decisions themselves. These decisions can lead to either positive or negative results and some can be life-changing. This is one reason why I apply Barbara Coloroso's theory of helping students to discipline themselves as they grow into young adults.

Another idea I would consider to be in my top ten beliefs is the idea of the "honor level system," which was developed by Budd Churchward. The specific portion of the honor level system that I really appreciate is the discipline steps. This system has four steps to follow. The first step is to give the student a reminder of what he or she is supposed to be doing. This is a very important first step because it focuses on the correct behavior and makes no mention of the misbehavior. This first step should not be a reprimand and should be used early. The second step is to issue a warning. This should be the first mention of the misbehavior that is occurring. This step should be done quietly and directed only toward the student who is misbehaving. I really like the idea of using a written slip which can be handed to the student quietly as the teacher continues teaching. This step should not distract any of the class from the current assigned task. Another aspect of this second step that I appreciate in Churchward's plan is the idea of redemption. A student who has reached level two in the discipline plan still has the option to redeem him/herself. This redemption can be done through good behavior. If a student does not misbehave anymore throughout the remainder of the day, the warning slip can be thrown away to give the student a clean slate for the next day. The only problem I can foresee with this plan is the student who will know that he or she can have a reminder and a warning everyday without ever receiving any punishment. I feel the

proper approach to solving this problem is to not let that student redeem himself or herself that day. The third step in the plan is to impose an infraction. This is the first time when teaching should be interrupted. This infraction should be one in which the entire class helped develop and knows the results of the infraction. The fourth and final step in this process is the removal of the student from the class. This final step may seem a little harsh to some people, however, I feel it is very appropriate and necessary. Every time a student makes a scene in a classroom, the learning environment of the other students is greatly disrupted. After the removal of the misbehaving student from the classroom, it will still take the teacher several minutes to guide the remaining students back on task. One last aspect of Churchward's honor system that I like is that the name is appealing to both the students and other teachers in the building. The students in a class where the honor system is implemented have a feeling of belonging in that they have to work for their "honor" when they are in that class. As misbehavior occurs they can lose a step in the honor system, however, they can also redeem themselves with appropriate behavior.

Another one of my top ten beliefs comes from Linda Albert's idea of cooperative discipline. This belief is of the three C's of cooperative discipline. The first C is Capability. I feel we need to let all students know that they are capable of behaving properly. Students who have been in trouble often in the past may think that it is impossible for them to stay out of trouble. This is why it is important to let them know that they are capable of behaving correctly in this classroom. The second of the three C's is Connect. We need to help our students connect to what we teach them. I think that if students can connect with what they are learning they will be less apt to misbehave. The

third C is Contribute. Students need to contribute to what happens in their classroom. If students are busy doing classroom duties (learning, class work, or classroom jobs), then they will not be misbehaving. Another aspect of Albert's cooperative discipline that I believe in is the five A's. These five A's fall under the second C which is helping students connect. The five A's are Acceptance, Attention, Appreciation, Affirmation, and Affection. I feel these five items are crucial to have in the classroom. If students can feel acceptance, receive adequate attention, be appreciated, receive affirmation, and be given affection, then a community of learners can then be created. However, in order for this to work correctly, all students need take part in these five classroom qualities, not just the teacher. A third idea from Albert's cooperative discipline plan is the four R's of consequences. When a teacher is creating consequences he/she needs to keep these four items in mind. They should be related, reasonable, respectful, and reliably enforced. First, they need to be related to the consequence. This is important so the student can understand why they are being punished and how it relates to what they did. Second, they need to be reasonable. If consequences aren't reasonable students will be focusing too much on the consequence and not enough on why they received the consequence. Third, consequences need to be respectful. They should be firm but also friendly. Finally, consequences should be reliably enforced. This means that they should be consistent from day to day.

Another belief that I feel falls into my classroom management top ten beliefs is the idea of the synergetic sunburst from CM Charles. I feel that the sunburst incorporates all of the necessary components of a successful and friendly classroom. Also, I think that a classroom activity could be developed using the sunburst. The students can form a

circle that incorporates all the parts of the sunburst. Then the teacher can take away one part of the sunburst to show how a classroom can not function without every component.

My final top ten belief comes from Kegan, Kyle, and Scott's Win-Win Discipline plan. According to this belief teachers need to promote good behavior and prevent misbehavior in order to implement the Big Three. The big three are (1) the curriculum needs to be engaging and interesting, (2) instruction needs to be varied to meet students needs, and (3) management needs to have specific prevention strategies in place.

I feel if I can implement these top ten beliefs that I will have a classroom that is engaging and is full of students who are willing to learn and get along with each other.

Procedures and Routines

There are many procedures and routines that need to be established to make a classroom run smoothly and properly. Many of these procedures are simple everyday practices that many students don't even think about after the first few weeks of school, but they are still performing them every day. Some of these daily procedures and routines are those such as morning procedures, classroom helpers, distributing materials, sharpening pencils, dismissing students, gaining attention and a signal for quiet, bathroom procedures, attendance, and emergency drills. These procedures may not seem important but they can either make or break the classroom environment. I have chosen the above procedures because I think they are some of the most important procedures to make a classroom run effectively. I will start with the beginning of the school day. This is a vital part of starting the school day efficiently. Students have a window of time to make their way to the classroom each day. During this time they need to have something to keep them busy. If they know that each morning they will have work waiting on their

desk they will make their way to the classroom more quickly. My procedure on morning work is that each morning the students will have work waiting for them on their desk. On the board will also be a list of tasks. These will be items specific to the day (such as turn your midterm into the teacher at his or her desk.) If a student should finish their morning work before it is time for class to start they will know to read silently at his or her desk. During this morning work time the students will also be expected to prepare themselves for the school day. If they need to sharpen pencils they should do this then. Each student should use this time so they can be in their seats and ready when the teacher is ready to begin the school day. The next procedure I think is important is related to morning work is sharpening pencils. This should be taken care of during morning work time. The students should make sure they have enough pencils sharpened at this time to last them throughout the day. Another aspect that is related to morning rituals is the bathroom procedure. Each morning the students should use the restroom before they come to class. Their next bathroom break will not be until later in the morning. When it is time for bathroom break, everyone will line up outside the bathrooms. Four boys and four girls will go in the bathroom at a time. When someone comes out another person may go in. We will do this until everyone who needs to use the bathroom has had a chance. There will be no talking in the bathroom and if a person is taking too much time in the restroom they will be subject to discipline. The fourth procedure I find important is classroom helpers. My procedure on classroom helpers will be very clear after the first week of school. I plan to run my classroom with a mini-economy system. In this system each student will have a "classroom job." They will do their job and will get a pay check each week. With this paycheck they will pay fines for misbehavior or for not following

classroom procedures. There will be auctions periodically to give them a chance to spend some of their money on items up for auction from the teacher. One of my classroom jobs will be a “paper-passer-outer” to distribute the materials. If there are papers to be passed back to students the students who have this job will take care of this task. However, if there are papers to be distributed during a lesson, the teacher will pass these out. My procedure for attendance is one that I obtained from a teacher at Price elementary school in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Each morning as the students come in to the classroom there is stick with their name on it lying next to a can by the door. As they walk by they will put their stick in the can. This particular teacher also used this to procedure to sort which students would be receiving hot or cold lunches. There are two cans one for hot lunch and one for cold. Another very important procedure for a smooth operating classroom is the procedure for gaining attention and signaling for quiet. The way I will get students attention and signal for quite it to turn the lights off. This is the way I have found to get everyone’s attention regardless of how loud the classroom is at the time. Once the lights are turned off I will count to five and turn the lights back on. By that time the students should be quiet and ready to receive instructions. One of the most important procedures in the school building is the procedure for emergency drills. These drills are vital and need to be second nature to the students so the students will know how to act quickly and quietly during an emergency. My procedure for this will vary as to where I teach. However, I can list some of the steps that will be constant no matter where I teach. When an alarm sounds, the students will quickly and quietly move to the door. Once they are at the door they will receive specific instructions from the teacher. After they have received instructions they will join hands with the student in front and behind them and move

quickly to the destination. Again, this may be different depending on where I choose to teach, however, I feel I have outlined some of the steps in the procedure that will be the same. The last classroom procedure I am highlighting is my dismissal procedures. Dismissal can be one of the most hectic times of the school day if it is not planned correctly. As the end of the day approaches I will dismiss students by group or row (depending on how the classroom is arranged at that time) to gather their belongings. At that time if any of those students require a signature on their homework folders they can obtain it. Once they are ready to go they will stack their chairs at the end of each row and sit quietly on top of their desks with their belongings. As students finish I will dismiss others to do the same. Once everyone is ready I will dismiss groups of students to leave according to how they go home. This will vary as to how each individual school dismisses students at the end of the day.

I feel I have outlined some of the most important procedures and routines of a school day. With these procedures and routines in place, I feel I can operate a classroom with minimal down time. I do realize that many of these may change over the next year, however, I feel I have nice starting block prepared to assist me with my first days, months, and years of teaching.

Implementation of Classroom Management Practices

Although I will have very few actual rules in my classroom they will be broad and will cover many items under one rule. The first rule that will be posted in our classroom will be about respect. It will state respect everyone and their belongings. Another rule that I think should be displayed in my classroom is that there is no put downs. A third rule I think is important enough to display in my classroom is to set a good example in

everything you do. Finally, a fourth rule that I think is important to display in my classroom is to follow all classroom instructions and rules given by the teacher. These will be displayed on a poster prepared by the teacher before the students arrive. Once the students are present they will create some of their own classroom rules that are based off of the rules written and posted by the teacher. The rules will be enforced with the four step system listed above in my top ten procedures. The first step will be to give a reminder of what they are supposed to be doing. This first step should completely unrelated to what the student was doing that wasn't correct. Instead, it should focus on what they should be doing. The second step will be a warning. This is where the teachers focuses on what the student is doing wrong and reminds them of the next step. The third step is imposing an infraction. This is where the teacher gives the student a consequence for what he or she did. The fourth and final step of this discipline process is the removal of the student from the class. Upon removal the student will visit with the principal to decide upon further consequences.

Since curriculum and instruction are a primary part of the school day, I have designed some tools to prevent student misbehavior during this part of the day. One of my most important tools for this is keeping my lessons and activities engaging and interesting. If I can keep these lessons interesting the students will be engaged and occupied in learning instead of thinking of how to break the rules. One way I will ensure that I have engaging and interesting lessons is to allow my students to help me plan my curriculum. If I allow my students to help me choose my curriculum I know that sometime during the term each student will have a topic of their interest incorporated into a lesson.

There are many considerations and decisions that will have to be made when developing a classroom management style. I need to develop a style that will help me to prevent misbehavior and encourage learning. Also, my style needs to be supportive to students and show them that I am interested in what they are doing as well as what I am teaching. Lastly, I need to make sure that my teaching style is corrective. I need to make sure I can approach my students in a sensitive manner when misbehavior occurs. Following that I then need to guide them back to good behavior without ill feelings and with a positive attitude. These practices are very important to remember when I am developing my classroom management style.

Parent Letter

November 27, 2006

Dear Parents,

My name is Jeff Bauman and I am your child's teacher this year. I am excited to start this new school year and am sure you and your child feel the same. I have designed a classroom management plan that will be used with your child and his/her classmates this year. I will outline a few of the main points for your information. If you would like to learn more about my classroom management plan I would be glad to talk to you sometime.

I will start by telling you the first few things that will happen when a discipline problem occurs. When a child is doing something that is considered off task or non-related to our current learning operation I will simply give the entire class a reminder of what they are supposed to be doing. This will not single any one child out then as to what they were doing wrong. If this misbehavior continues after this reminder I will then give the child who is misbehaving a warning slip. This slip will be kept on that child's desk for the remainder of the day. If the child corrects his/her behavior after this warning is issued they can redeem themselves before the end of the day. If the misbehavior continues at some point in the day after this warning is issued then the teacher will issue some sort of consequence. This may be in the form of loss of recess time, extra work issued, or extra classroom chores. If this does still not stop the misbehavior, my last step as the classroom teacher will be to remove the child from the class. At this point the child has interrupted the learning environment for the other students long enough. When the child is removed they will be sent to the office. At this point you as the parents may receive a phone call letting you know what your child has done. You can then discuss what happens next with the office staff.

One last point of my classroom management plan that I would like you to be informed of is our classroom rules. I will have four basic rules posted when the students arrive in my classroom for the first time. These will be the building foundation for the rest of the rules that will be created by the students on the first few days of school. These rules will then be sent home with the students to review with you. You and your student will need to sign a copy of these rules to place in my file that you and your student both understand them.

If you find that you have any questions regarding my classroom management plan or any part of my classroom and your child's education, feel free to contact me at any time. Again, I look forward to having the opportunity to work with you and your child this academic year!

Sincerely,

Jeff Bauman, Classroom Teacher