

Classroom Behavior Management Plan

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Philosophy of Classroom Management

Classroom management is a course taught at every teacher college across the country. However, classroom discussions and textbooks cannot cover all of the issues that a beginning teacher might have when he starts to teach. It is still important, though, for beginning teachers to look at theories of professionals to see what works and what does not. It is also important to participate in discussions with real classroom teachers and peers because trading ideas can lead to new thoughts about how to deal with student behaviors in the classroom. Additionally, it is important to read the information in textbooks because they present a variety of theories and ideas for new teachers to learn from. There is not one exact teaching style that fits every teacher. Instead, it is a combination of textbook chapters, discussion questions, and theorists that help form a new teacher's classroom management plan. Over the course of my years at Manchester, I have come across ideas I liked, observed ideas I did not like, and formed my own opinion on what works in the classroom. I agree with the theories of Linda Albert, Lee and Marlene Canter, and Harry Wong and it is those three theorists that help form my approach to classroom management.

As a new teacher, I realize a lot of my personality will affect what goes on in the classroom. First, I see myself as a teacher who believes in getting work done first and having fun later. I think it is important to have fun and I know that it is important to give students a chance to both learn and relax but my job as a teacher is to teach students and help them learn important concepts and skills too. My personality also works well because I am a patient person and I listen well to others' concerns. In a setting with middle school students, this works well because students often feel like nobody understands them or listens to them so they act out. I believe my ability to listen to the students can help change some of that behavior and the students will respond positively to it.

In addition, I know from personal experience that the classroom environment can make all the difference in whether a student learns or not. If the teacher sets up a classroom where students are not afraid to ask questions, share answers with each other, and take chances than behavior problems will go down because students are not worried they will be embarrassed. I have been in classes where my classmates and I did not feel like we could ask questions and then we goofed around instead of learning so that we did not look dumb. However, because I am aware of this as a teacher, I can use this experience to create a classroom that supports students to feel safe and ask questions. Also, I believe all students can learn if they are given the tools to do so. For some students, these tools are a quiet spot in the classroom to work on homework, or a seat near the teacher's desk so someone can keep them on task. It might be extended time on a test so students do not act out when the time is running out and they are embarrassed they did not get all the answers down. I feel all students are individuals and they should be treated as individuals. I have an attitude that reflects these beliefs, ideas, and experiences and that is why these ideas appear in my management plan.

One of the most important things in my theory of classroom management deals with preventing student misbehavior. I believe a lot of problems can be stopped before they get started with good routines and procedures. This idea is a lot like that of Harry Wong's. Wong talks a lot about setting up routines and procedures for every part of the classroom and I feel that by doing so a teacher can stop a lot of misbehaviors. For example, if there is a procedure for passing papers across the rows in the classroom instead of passing them forward, then this stops students from hitting each other in the head with the papers, throwing them on the floor, or calling the person ahead of them names. Once procedures and routines are in place in the classroom, student misbehavior will decrease because there are preventive measures in place that assist students in acting in appropriate ways.

Another thing that can be done to prevent student misbehavior is to keep lessons on an appropriate pace. If a teacher spends too much time, or not enough time, on one thing then students will act out because they are frustrated, embarrassed they do not understand something, or because they are bored. Richard Curwin and Allen Mendler said students who are engaged in a lesson will be more motivated to learn and less likely to misbehave. I plan to keep my lectures short, provide students with time to complete an activity, have daily bell work, and have assignments or projects students need to complete each day. By keeping students busy, they will not have as much time to act out because they will always be learning and engaged.

If a student is beginning to misbehave or the preventative measures are not working, supportive techniques can be used to manage student behavior. Fred Jones stated that by being near a student, the misbehavior will decrease. By using proximity control in my classroom, I can help students get their behavior under control without having to say anything and allowing them to “stay cool” in front of their peers. If standing near a student does not work, nonverbal signals can also support a student in making appropriate choices. The “teacher look” can help a student remember to make smart choices about not talking during homework time or a finger pointing to the desk could be used to remind students to keep working. Supportive techniques like this allow me to keep teaching while managing behavior at the same time. This can be especially important when there is limited time to teach in a middle or high school setting and every minute needs to be used for learning and not for classroom management.

Finally, it is important to correct any misbehaviors that occur in the classroom or else the students will begin to “take over” and stop respecting the teacher. Misbehaviors, from the small to the big, occur in every classroom and it is important to have a plan to manage those behaviors. First, I believe consequences should be enforced each time a student breaks a classroom rule. For example, in my classroom students will not be allowed to talk during a test because it is

disrespectful to students trying to do their best and pass. If a student does talk, then I believe the consequences should be enforced in a reliable, reasonable, and respectful manner. These ideas are from the theories of Linda Albert. If a student refuses to follow the rules than there is going to be a consequence, such as talking during a test will result in the student receive a lower grade on the test. I will not yell at the student but I will talk to them in a respectful manner about what they did wrong, what is going to happen now, and what is going to happen in the future. So if a student did talk during a test, I would talk with the student about what they did wrong, about how they are going to take the rest of the test in the back of the room away from other students, and that they will receive a lower grade. Then, the student and I would decide if it would be better for the student to continue taking tests alone in the back of the room or if they should move seats so they are not as likely to talk next time. Similar to Linda Albert, I will enforce my consequences each time a student misbehaves, but I will be sure that the consequences are related, such as having to return to the classroom during lunch to finish the an assignment that was not completed because a student was talking. The consequences will also be enforced in a respectful manner. I am not going to yell but, instead, have a discussion with the student about what went wrong and what could be done better in the future.

If a student misbehaves seriously in the classroom, such as threatening another student or starting a fight, I will change how I handle the behavior slightly. First, I will look at the situation to be sure that the other students, myself, or even the student misbehaving are not in any danger. Second, I will get the student's attention and send the student down to the office, both to calm down and to talk to the principal. My goal is to teach my students, but I need to create a safe classroom where students feel safe too. If students feel safe and accepted, which can be difficult as teenagers are trying to figure out who they really are, then misbehaviors should decrease.

Managing student behavior is difficult at the middle and high school level. It is hard to do a reward with tokens or points like an elementary teacher might do because we only see the students for a period or two a day. We can take away lunch and give detentions but there are really no free times like recess to take away from students. It is also hard to reward students with free time for things like movies or games because middle and high school teachers only see students for one or two periods a day and that time is needed to teach the subjects. This means I need to be creative in how I manage my classroom if I want my students to behavior in a way that helps everyone learn. I plan to prevent many behaviors before they start by having clear procedures in place on the first day of school. I plan on supporting students in making good choices by using silent techniques that allow them to “stay cool” in front of their peers. I also plan on using discussion as a tool to help correct misbehaviors in the classroom. There will still be consequences for misbehaviors and they will be enforced reliably, respectfully, and reasonably. However, I will also discuss with students their behaviors and see if the student can come up with a new plan for learning. Sometimes it may be as simple as remembering to bring a pencil to class instead of stealing the one from their table partner. Other times, there is a deeper issue that is causing the student to misbehaving and by listening to the student I can help them figure out a better way to act in class. Treating the students with respect will be a big component of my plan because I expect the students to treat me with respect. I cannot expect my students to know what respect is so I will have to demonstrate it for them. However, my goal is that my students will not only learn math, but will also learn how to treat one another with respect. Forming a classroom that treats students and teachers with respect not only creates a positive learning environment, but also helps students grow and become successful adults.

Classroom Rules and Room Arrangement

The classroom rules I plan on using took a lot of thought and reflection. I wanted to incorporate my beliefs as well as the beliefs of theorists I agree with. In addition, I have observed a lot of classrooms and seen a lot different ways to have classroom rules. One method I liked was one I observed in my cooperating classroom. She used an acronym for students to remember the rules and made the rules short and to the point. I decided to try a similar idea with my rules using the word MATH. First, because I believe that being prepared can help prevent students from misbehaving, I am requiring my students to come with their materials to class each day. If a student has their supplies, they are less likely to take a neighbor's pencil or ask to leave class to get homework or a textbook. Next, I expect my students to ask questions. If students ask questions they will be less likely to goof off when they do not understand something. Third, I expect my students to try each problem and work hard during math class. By making sure my students are working throughout the class period, they will not have time to mess around and get in trouble. Finally, I expect my students to honor their classmates learning and be respectful towards one another. This means that students will not talk during lessons unless they are supposed to or that they will not make fun of another classmate for asking a question. Respect is a big belief of mine and it guides many of the ideas I have about classroom management. Below is an example of what the rules will look like posted in my classroom. Next to each rule are my expectations for how students will follow this rule. I took this idea from Harry Wong who wrote about giving your students clear expectations for learning in order to minimize student misbehavior.

- **Materials** - I expect homework, pencils, paper, and textbooks to be brought every day.
- **Ask** – I expect students to ask questions but they must raise their hands to do so.
- **Try** – All students are expected to try each problem and work hard each class period.
- **Honor** – Students are to honor each other and respect others that are learning

The consequences in my room for not following one of the classroom rules will be enforced reliable and be related to the student offense, just like Linda Albert suggests. For example, students who are off task during homework time and talking with their table partner will spend part of their free lunch period with me in the room doing the homework. If a student disrespects another teacher or myself, than the student will be required to write an apology note and hand deliver it to the teacher. Students should see that their misbehaviors will get them in trouble each time and that there is a logical and related consequence for the behavior. If a student only received detentions for their misbehavior or loses homework points, they would not be learning what it appropriate or what is not appropriate in the classroom. I am preparing my students not only for later math courses in high school but for being successful adults as well.

I have a variety of policies that I expect my students to follow in the classroom. Each policy is something that I thought was important in order to help students learn in the best way possible and run a classroom effectively. For example, there is a policy for students who do not complete their homework on time and a policy for students to follow if they are absent and miss a class. Below are the four most important policies of my classrooms and the consequences that go along with each policy if students choose not to follow them.

Late Work: All homework is expected to be turned in the next class period unless stated in class as otherwise. For each day homework is late, the student will lose 10% each day. No late homework will be accepted after a week. All projects done by individuals, as opposed to group projects, will be given a due date. For each day the project is late, the individual will lose 10% from their total grade. For group projects, only the individual will be penalized for turning in late work, not the entire group (unless the group is at fault). The 10% a day policy is still the same for the late individual or entire group.

Absences: All absences must be excused by the office. Excused absences can be found in the student handbook. Unless I receive a notice from the office excusing the absence, the student will be considered unexcused and homework, tests, quizzes, and projects will not be made up. If an absence is excused, the student will receive an additional day for each day missed to complete the homework.

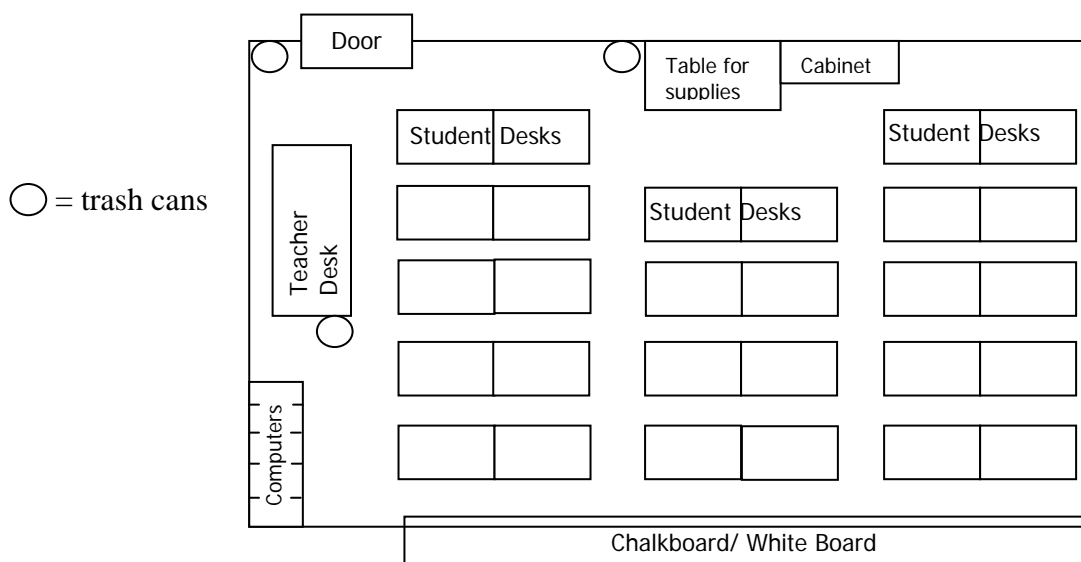
Tardies: Students who are late to class must fill out a tardy slip as stated in the school handbook. If the student has a pass from another teacher or administrator, the student will be excused. If not, the student will not be able to make up the bell work points for that morning. Students who are tardy two or more times will need to stay after class and talk with me about options for getting to class on time. Four or more tardies will result in a phone call to parents and/or office referral.

Expected behavior for group work: All students are expected to contribute during class group work or class projects. Each member must complete his or her assigned part of the task and/or participate. Group members will grade each other at the end of a project and, while I do not rely on these notes as my only consideration in giving grades, I do refer to them occasionally. Group members who fail to do their part will be individually penalized, not the entire group. During in class work, all members of a group are expected to work together. I will call on random group members to answer questions and I expect all group members to be able to explain how or why they got a particular answer.

Student grades will be figured by quarter or trimester, whichever my school district follows. Grades in my classroom will be weighted. This means that even though a student may pass all of their tests but, if they do not do their homework, they will not pass the class. The following is how my grading book is set up: homework will equal 50% of a student's grade, tests will equal 25% of a student's grade, quizzes will equal 10% of a student's grade, and projects will equal 15% of a student's grade. Homework will be graded for completion and for correct answers. Students will get 5 points for completing their homework each night. However, student work must be shown; it cannot be just answers written down on paper. Students will also get one point for each correct answer. I believe that homework is very important and contributes to a student understanding the material better. I do not mind if students work together but each student must show his or her own work and solutions to the problems.

My ideal classroom arrangement allows students to work cooperatively if needed but also makes sure that they are facing the chalkboard where they can see the day's lesson. I included a basic design for how my classroom could look. The design is similar to some that I have observed and I found it to be the most effective in helping students learn.

Diagram of The Classroom



Procedures and Routines

Beginning of the period: When the students come into the classroom, they will find their seats immediately. Then, students will get out their supplies and begin on the daily bell work problems on the board. Students will have five minutes after the bell rings to complete their homework. If they finish the bell work during this time, they can work on extra credit logic problems till the five minutes of bell work are up. Students can also use this time to check for any missing assignments, turn in late homework, and speak with the teacher about any questions or concerns. This routine is important because it gets students in the right mindset to begin class. It also sets a tone of learning for the class because, while the students are working, the teacher is taking attendance and there are no unnecessary interruptions.

Selecting Partners: Students will use the clock method for getting partners. At the start of the year, each student will get a blank clock face divided up into twelve sections, one for each hour of the clock. The students will then have some time to go around the room selecting one partner for each section or hour on the clock. When they find a person, they will write that person's name in one of the sections, like 3:00 spot, and that person will write their name in the 3:00 spot. When the clock is filled with names, each student will have twelve different partners to work with. When it is time to work with partners, the teacher call out a time, like 6:00, and the students will have to find their 6:00 partner. This procedure keeps students from always working with the same partner and it allows them to match up quickly with a partner and begin working without wasting time trying to find someone to work with.

Dismissal: At the end of the period, students will be expected to finish up homework assignments or projects. Students will not be allowed to pack up and wait by the door. Students

who have finished their work may get a logic puzzle from the “extras” or supplies area in the classroom and work on it quietly. If the majority of the class is finished with the assignment, the teacher will use an activity from the “Time Filler Bank” to keep students busy until the bell rings. This procedure is important because it keeps students engaged until the very last minute of class.

Distributing Materials: In math class, there will be times when notes, tests, handouts, or other materials will need to be handed out to students. Student desks will be arranged in rows with two desks and then an aisle. Any paperwork that needs to go out to students will be handed to the person at the end of the row. Students will then be expected pass the papers across the rows, rather than up or down the rows, with each student taking one paper before passing it on. If the students are working on a project or in larger groups, one person from each group will be selected as the materials person. This person will be responsible for getting supplies, paper, or whatever else is needed for all members of the group. It is important to have a procedure for distributing materials because students will be less likely to misbehave when they know what is expected of them and how to act.

August 1, 2009

Parent Letter

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I am excited to introduce myself as your daughter or son's math teacher this year. We are going to spend the entire year together learning mathematics by doing hands-on practice, group work, and individual learning activities. This is not going to be an easy year though as I have high expectations for all of my students. Mainly, students will be expected to come to class each day prepared to learn something new. I expect your student to show up daily with pencils, textbook, notebook paper, completed homework, and a positive attitude. I do not expect all of my students to like math, but I do expect them to participate in class and complete the work given. Your child will probably have homework every night. The homework should not take the student more than 30-45 minutes, but it is necessary for your student to work on the skill learned in class that day so it can be reinforced at home.

Before the school year begins I want you to know a few things about my classroom. First, I would like to state my classroom rules:

- **Materials** - I expect homework, pencils, paper, and textbooks to be brought every day.
- **Ask** – I expect students to ask questions but they must raise their hands to do so.
- **Try** – All students are expected to try each problem and work hard each class period.
- **Honor** – Students are to honor each other and respect others that are learning.

As you can see, my classroom rules spell out MATH as a way for students to remember my expectations. If students agree to follow these rules, the year should be one of learning and fun. I have also attached one more page that explains the classroom procedures and grading policies. Below I will need both the student and parent to sign stating they have read the rules. **The form is to be turned in no later than September 1, 2009.**

If you should need to reach me before school begins, or anytime throughout the school year, you can email me at ddhaffner@spartans.mancheser.edu or call me at the school at 000-000-0000. I check my voicemail and email throughout the day and into the evening and I will do my best to get back to you.

Please remember to review the attached page and classroom rules with your child as I will hold him or her accountable to this information all year. I look forward to meeting your son or daughter in a few weeks.

Sincerely,
Mr. Haffner

I have read the rules, procedures, and grading policies. I understand that my son or daughter will be held accountable for these rules and procedures for the entire school year.

Parent Name: _____ Phone: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Best time to call: _____

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Grading Policies

Grades in my classroom are weighted. This means that even though a student may pass all of their tests but, if they do not do their homework, they will not pass the class. The following is how my grading book is set up:

- Homework - 50%
- Tests – 25%
- Quizzes – 10%
- Projects – 15%

Homework will be graded for completion and for correct answers. Students will get 5 points for completing their homework each night. However, student work must be shown; it cannot be just answers written down on paper. Students will also get one point for each correct answer. Homework is very important and it must be completed each night by the student. I do not mind if students work together but each student must show his or her own work and solutions to the problems.

Policies and Procedures

Late Work:

All homework is expected to be turned in the next class period unless stated in class as otherwise. For each day homework is late, the student will lose 10% each day. No late homework will be accepted after a week. All projects done by individuals, as opposed to group projects, will be given a due date. For each day the project is late, the individual will lose 10% from their total grade. For group projects, only the individual will be penalized for turning in late work, not the entire group (unless the group is at fault). The 10% a day policy is still the same for the late individual or entire group.

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