

TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

Action, Strategies
& Opportunities

Classroom Management

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Classroom Management



Classroom management is the process by which teachers and schools create and maintain positive behavior of students in learning settings with the purpose of enhancing students' academic skills and competencies, as well as their social and emotional development (Brophy, 2006; Emmer & Sabornie, 2015).

It is much more than incorporating a punitive disciplinary system largely focused on compliance. Rather, classroom management encompasses practices that build positive, compassionate classroom communities that engage students, and minimize behaviors that impede learning for both individual and groups of students.

Classroom management systems are most affected by the quality of teacher-student interactions (Marzano and Marzano, 2003).

This guide offers classroom management strategies and resources in the following areas: prevention and resolution of behavior problems, creating a classroom environment conducive to managing behavior, and instructional practices that can be used to engage students, keep them on task, and avoid distractions.

Of 228 variables affecting student achievement, classroom management had the largest effect on student achievement. This makes intuitive sense—students cannot learn in a chaotic, poorly managed classroom (Wang, Haertel, and Walberg, 1993).

Effective teachers use management not to control student behavior, but to influence and direct it in a constructive manner to set the stage for instruction (McLeod, Fisher, & Hoover, 2003).



Behavior & Discipline

Behavior and discipline is an integral part of teaching. Instruction affects behavior, and behavior affects instruction. This is why discipline is now considered a strand of teaching, along with instruction, communication, relations with parents, and classroom structure and management.

The term discipline has traditionally suggested teacher control, coercion, and forceful tactics. Rather, behavior management is the process of preventing, suppressing, and redirecting misbehavior. Effective behavior management principles work across almost all subject areas and grade levels (Brophy, 2006; Lewis, et al., 2006).

Teachers concerned with behavior management typically need help with two issues:

- Preventing behavior problems
- Resolving or dealing with behavior problems (Kratochwill, T.R., DeRoos, R., & Blair, S., 2015)

Strategies

Modeling and practicing the use of positive words: The teacher serves as a powerful model in providing examples of ways for students to support one another, and must also recognize and bring attention to students' use of positive verbal interactions (Bridges, 1995).

Ways to model the use of positive words

- ⊕ Model and make positive interactions visible by encouraging others and asking questions for clarification.
- ⊕ Discuss the impact of word choices and actions by providing examples of how negative or positive words make the listener feel.
- ⊕ Provide daily feedback by pointing out positive interactions and use examples to help students self monitor word choices. Discuss and celebrate when positive verbal interactions are used.
- ⊕ Monitor and hold students accountable by encouraging students to give each other feedback if and when positive words are not being used. The expectation of positive verbal interactions should be reinforced daily

Avoiding Power Struggles: In every classroom there are students who suffer from deficits in personal empowerment and self-worth. Many teachers have experienced a confrontation with a student in which the student is asked to do something and simply refuses or lashes out in anger.

When a teacher reacts angrily this can escalate to a power struggle. As with any confrontational situation in the classroom, the message to the student should always be "Your behavior is unacceptable, and we need to find a solution."

Ways to avoid power struggles:

- ⊕ Disengage from the struggle
 - Speak calmly
 - Be brief, specific, and to the point
 - Don't overreact
 - Maintain self-control
 - Respond, don't react

- ⊕ Interrupt the escalation
 - Diversion: send the student on an errand or change topic
 - Cool down: allow the student to sit and regain composure
 - Paraphrase: paraphrasing students' concern will help them heard and understood
 - Use open-ended questions: ask who, what, where, how to clarify the problem and look for solutions. Avoid asking why as it may seem you are blaming the student.
- ⊕ De-escalate the conflict
 - Use positive words to reduce the student's sense of threat, defensiveness, or emotional tension
 - Be aware of body language. Avoid finger wagging, facial expressions, arm crossing. Try to remain neutral.
 - Acknowledge the student's choice to cooperate and the resulting consequences in a neutral, calm voice
 - Label the emotion. If it is evident a student is feeling angry, ask if he is angry. This often gives the student a chance to vent without continuing the misbehavior and averts confrontation
 - Label the behavior not the student
 - Examine the cause of the problem - be sensitive to confrontations that may arise because a student feels threatened or exposed.
- ⊕ Identify the problem and find solutions
 - Once the confrontation is defused, discuss the problem and work with the student to generate possible solutions.
- ⊕ Recognize effort and progress
 - Once a course of action is agreed upon, you should provide recognition to the student for his efforts in working toward improvement

Ways to teach and practice conflict resolution strategies

Have students use:

- ⊕ Encouraging statements to convey interest, and encourage dialogue.
- ⊕ Clarifying statements to clarify what was said, get more information, and help understand each other's points of view.
- ⊕ Restating statements to show that they are listening and understanding, and to check interpretations of what is said.
- ⊕ Reflecting statements to evaluate their own feelings, as well as how another student feels.
- ⊕ Summarizing statements to pull together important facts and ideas for further discussion.
- ⊕ Validating statements that demonstrate appreciation of another student's point of view.

To identify a misbehavior, ask the following questions. Does the behavior:

- ⊕ Disturb me as I conduct instruction and manage the class?
- ⊕ Disturb students as they engage in the learning process?
- ⊕ Place students in physical or psychological harm?

- + Break a stated school or class rule -- one that I have a professional responsibility to enforce?
- + Give indications that it might escalate into a larger or more disturbing problem?

A student may exhibit bullying behavior if they also show:

- + Low interest in school and poor academic performance
- + Excessive feelings or rejection
- + Violence in drawing and writing
- + Uncontrolled anger
- + History of discipline problems, or violent or aggressive behavior
- + Intolerance of differences

One in four children who bully will have a criminal record by the age of 30.

Resilience research shows that responsive, protective adults can potentially help children to thrive in circumstances that might otherwise impede their development and well-being (Masten & Gewirtz, 2006; Ludy-Dobson and Perry, 2010, Holmes, 2014).

Young children exposed to multiple stressors often show pattern of disruptive behavior (Perry, 1994, 2009; Wilson and Hansen, 2011).

Recent studies found higher suspension and expulsion rates for students in PreK and Grade 1 than in Grades 6-12 (Gilliam, 2006, Samuels, 2014).

Traumatic experiences can interfere with attention capacity and memory for new learning (Phillips, 2008); affected children often struggle academically.

Traumatized children have difficulty connecting to future consequences (Gaskill & Perry, 2014; Greenwald, 2014).

The use of negative consequences can reinforce the unwarranted assumption that children are “choosing: to act out and can therefore choose to be “good” citizens.” This belief is not supported by neurobiological research which confirms traumatized children’s vulnerability to “fight or flight” reactivity (Phillips, 2008).

Studies estimate that 26 percent of our nation’s schoolchildren have experiences trauma during the early years (National Center for Mental Health Promotion and Youth Violence Prevention, 2012). In an ongoing study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention involving more than 17,000 participants, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported at least one category of childhood trauma, and more than one-fifth experienced three or more categories of trauma (CDC, 2015).

School expulsions disproportionately impact African American and Hispanic students who are 10 and four times, respectively, more likely than White students to be expelled (Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, 2012).

In New Orleans, 46% of the children that the Louisiana Center for Child’s Rights (LCCR) represents have been expelled or suspended. 25% have been arrested for something that happened in school, and 98% of them are African Americans (Perry, 2015)

Classroom Environment

Classroom environment includes the physical environment, contexts, and cultures in which students learn. The physical setting can send messages about authority and ownership, and it can dictate interaction.

Class environment also encompasses the culture of a school or class – its climate and characteristics, including how individuals interact with and treat one another -- as well as the ways in which teachers may organize an educational setting to facilitate learning.

Strategies

Classroom Climate: Ambrose et. al. (2010) define classroom climate as “the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical environments in which our students learn. Climate is determined by a constellation of interacting factors that include faculty-student interaction, the tone instructors set, instances of stereotyping or tokenism, the course demographics (for example, relative size of racial and other social groups enrolled in the course), student-student interaction, and the range of perspectives represented in the course content and materials” (p.170).

Classroom climate can be affected by both blatant instances of inequality directed towards a person or group of people and by smaller, more subtle “micro-inequities” that can negatively impact learning in the classroom and a student’s overall success in school (Hall, 1982; Hirschy & Braxton, 2004).

Some factors that may influence climate:

Stereotypes that cause alienation and marginalization among those who are the target of unfair generalizations. Students who are viewed or judged in a certain way may encounter tensions that interfere with learning. Teachers may also have underlying biases about gender or race that cause them to teach – or not teach – students differently, hold them to a different standard, or impose different forms of disciplinary action.

The tone of a class environment is influenced strongly by the teacher. Studies show that students approach teachers who express encouragement more so than those who come off as punitive.

Student-student interactions during and outside of class affect the overall climate. The ways in which teachers and administration deal with negative interactions has an impact on student learning.

Teacher-student interactions also play a role. Students who feel that their instructor is welcoming, has concern for minority student issues, and treats students as individuals and with respect report a better course climate (Astin, 1993).

Content. Content that includes a variety of perspectives or is representative of multiple cultures and views is more conducive to a positive climate. Ambrose et. al. (2010, p. 173-179).

Ways to develop a sense of belonging:

- + Allow students to participate in developing class rules and determining acceptable behavior in the classroom.
- + Encourage students to work in groups so all students get to know their classmates.
- + Have students create a name for their class or group.
- + Display the work of all students in the classrooms, library, hallways, etc.
- + Carefully prepare a plan for welcoming and integrating new students into the classroom.

Classroom Arrangement: Classroom arrangement has a powerful effect on the room's climate. Classrooms can be organized in ways that motivate and involve students in the learning process. This also encourages collaboration and community among the students.

Ways to arrange the classroom space:

- + Make decisions about how you want students to work. If teaching students to collaborate is important, you must arrange furniture in a way that encourages this. For example, rather than arranging desks in straight rows, arrange them in ways that develop feelings of community and promote student collaboration, such as a circle, U-shape, or small groups.
- + Involve students in discussions and decisions. Make it clear to them why furniture is arranged the way it is, and allow them to have some input. This increases students understanding of how materials and resources will be used for learning, and provides them a sense of responsibility.
- + Teach students to be responsible for materials. Model how spaces are to be used and materials are to be stored, accessed, and used. Emphasize the importance of taking care of community resources. Compliment students who have been especially helpful. Point out areas that look well maintained. Validate student efforts often.
- + Reestablish routines when necessary. Clearly display expectations, and review them often if students become lax about maintaining resources. Create no more than five rules or class norms – Keep things as simple as possible.
- + Rearrange groups and work areas when needed. Furniture may be rearranged and students may be put into new groups depending on a variety of factors, including academic levels, IEP requirements, learning styles, personality styles, special needs, etc.
- + Be mindful of biases. Arrange students based on their needs rather than personal opinions. Decorate classrooms with multicultural images that mirror student backgrounds and reflect the diversity of our society. Norms and expectations should take into account different cultural and communication styles, as well as gender differences, language needs and the desire to challenge stereotypes. Be mindful that gender, culture and ability may affect student comfort levels with verbal communication.

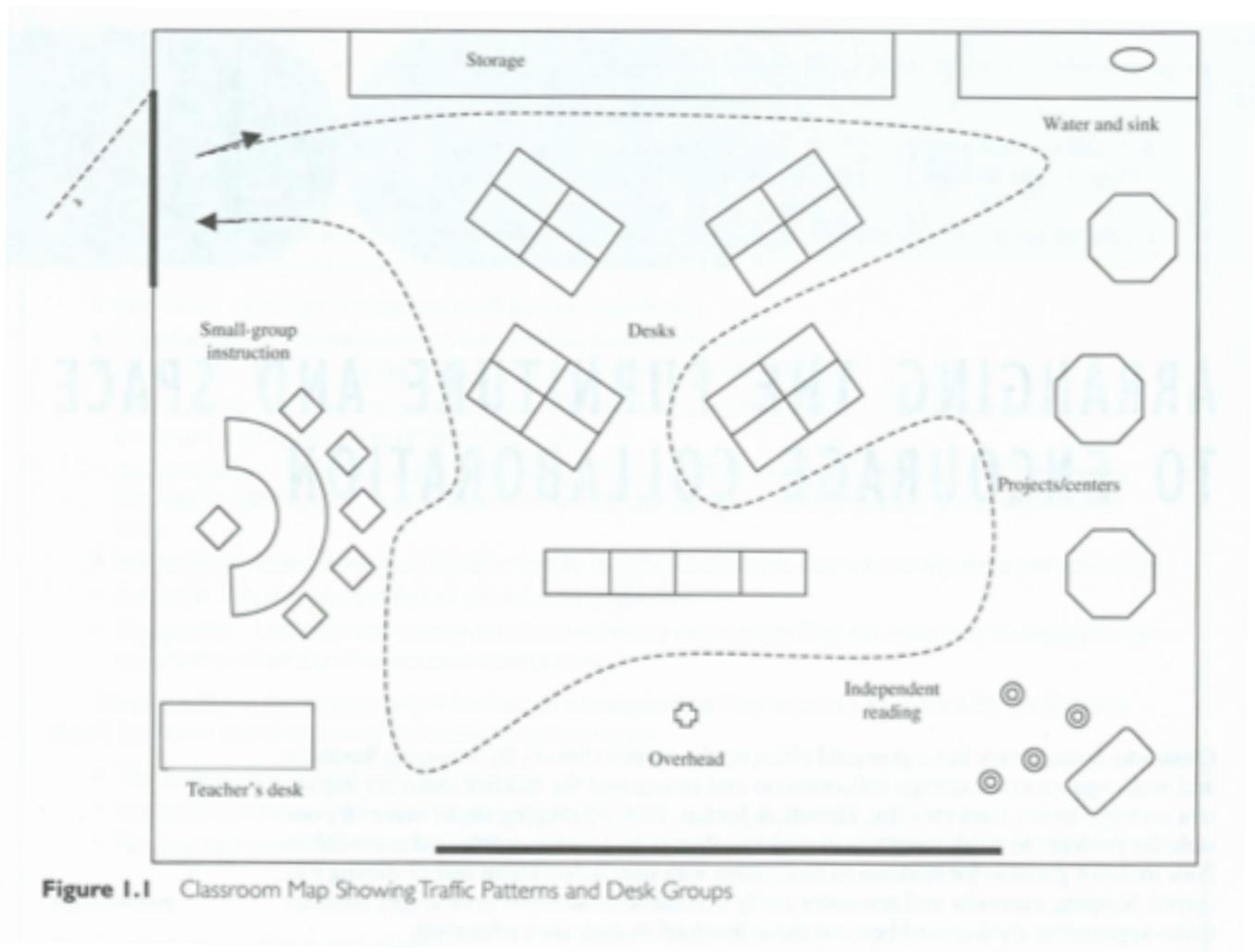
Rethinking Participation Norms

To most teachers, class participation means contributing to discussions and volunteering to answer questions. However, participation does not have to be verbal. Gender, culture and ability may affect student comfort levels with verbal communication. Modeling equity and inclusiveness calls for a broader definition of participation that includes active listening, written response, artistic response and involvement in small groups. These options should all be valued as classroom participation.

[Southern Poverty Law Center <http://www.tolerance.org/publication/classroom-culture>]

Space Guidelines

- ⊕ Materials students use should be visibly stored and accessible
- ⊕ There should be no dead space which promotes random or illegitimate activity
- ⊕ Make sure that all students will have an unrestricted view of the chalkboard.
- ⊕ Arrange the room so that the teacher can monitor quickly and easily
- ⊕ Use vertical space for display and learning enrichments
- ⊕ Keep active areas distinctly separate from quiet spaces. For example, separate learning centers of high activity, such as the cross-curricular center, from areas like the Reading/Language Arts Center, where students need quiet.
- ⊕ Have clear and safe traffic paths no matter how your room is arranged (Saphier, Gower 1987).



Instructional strategies are typically thought of in the context of facilitating learning. However, they can also be used to keep students focused and on track, establish routines and structure, and shape student behavior in powerful and positive ways.

Establish clear learning goals

Providing clear expectations of what students will learn out of an instructional unit?

- + Not only ensure that students understand what is being taught academically, but also what they will learn behaviorally and socially. (e.g. how to work with others, how to work in groups, how to do your part in group work, how to have a discussion, how to provide feedback, etc.)
- + Provide clear and accurate directions.
- + Provide regular feedback on how students are meeting those expectations.
- + Continually and systematically re-visit the goals.
- + Provide summative feedback regarding the goals.

Help students set their own learning goals

Giving students this kind of choice, gives them a sense of ownership and personal responsibility of their own learning, develops their self-confidence, and gives the message that the teacher cares about their interests.

- + Help students set realistic and concrete goals (e.g. get a B on the next test, complete all homework, study for 1 hour every night, and other learning targets)
- + Have them write down their goals and share them with the class. This will help keep them more accountable and create a supportive environment among students.
- + Have them check in regularly and reflect on their progress.

Develop effective and engaging lesson plans

Given that poorly designed lessons, uninteresting learning materials, or unclear expectations, could contribute to greater student disinterest, increased behavioral problems, or unruly and disorganized classes, classroom management cannot be easily separated from good teaching.

- + Plan for what students will be able to know or do by the end of the lesson
- + Plan what students will be doing during each phase of the lesson (Lemov, p. 67)
- + Select high-interest or relatable learning activities. Kids are more motivated to learn when their instructional activities are linked to a topic of high interest (Kern et al., 2002). Students may also be energized if they can relate activities to real life or believe that they will gain functional skills that they value (Miller et al., 2003).
- + Make the learning objective(s) visible to students
- + Plan for how you can keep students who finish early engaged.
- + Plan for how you will provide attention to students with challenges without distracting or taking away from other students.

Engage students in an equitable and positive way

Students, like adults, want to feel respected, supported, important, and a sense of self-worth. Emphasize equitable and positive classroom interactions with all students.

- + Make eye contact with each student by scanning the entire room as they speak and freely moving about the room.
- + Deliberately move toward and stand close to each student during the class period.
- + Attribute the ownership of ideas to the students who initiated them. For instance, in a discussion a teacher might say, “Brandon just added to Aida’s idea by saying that . . .”
- + Allow and encourage all students to participate in class discussions and interactions. Call on students randomly rather than in a set order to make sure they are always prepared to answer at any time.
- + Make sure to also call on students who do not commonly participate, not just those who respond most frequently.
- + Provide appropriate wait time for all students to respond to questions, regardless of their past performance or your perception of their abilities.
- + Also provide wait time to allow students to self-correct. Ask probing questions that help the student get to the correct answer.
- + Pace instruction appropriately. Moving through information too quickly may leave some students behind. However, a slow pace of instruction can actually cause significant behavior problems, because students become bored and distracted. Deliver instruction at a sufficiently brisk pace to hold student attention.
- + Give frequent teacher feedback and encouragement. Unfortunately, in most classrooms, educators tend to deliver many more reprimands than they do praise statements. Praise and other positive interactions between teacher and student serve an important instructional function, because these exchanges regularly remind the student of the classroom behavioral and academic expectations and give the student clear evidence that he or she is capable of achieving those expectations (Mayer, 2000).

Facilitation strategies

Class time provides many opportunities for students to be distracted, which can lead to disruptive behavior. Facilitation strategies can be used to prevent and address behavior problems. Exhaustive lists of strategies exist. It may take time to find what works best for your classroom. Some examples are (Hidden curriculum, 2014):

- + Entry Routine is a technique in which teachers establish a consistent, daily routine that begins as soon as students enter the classroom—preparing learning materials, making seat assignments, passing in homework, or doing a brief physical “warm-up” activity would all be examples of entry routines.
- + Do Now is a brief written activity that students are given as soon as they arrive in the classroom. This technique is intended to get students settled, focused, productive, and prepared for instruction as quickly as possible.
- + Tight Transitions is a technique in which teachers establish transition routines that students learn and can execute quickly and repeatedly without much direction from a teacher. For example, a teacher might say “reading time,” and students will know that they are expected to stop what they are working

on, put away their materials, get their books, and begin reading silently on their own. This technique helps to maximize instructional time by reducing the disarray and delay that might accompany transitions between activities.

- + Walk around is simply walking around the classroom rather than standing in front of the class or sitting at a desk. It is a simple but powerful way to maintain student attention, monitor and guide behavior, see where students are struggling, and focus their learning.
- + Seat Signals is a technique in which students use nonverbal signals while seated to indicate that they need something, such as a new pencil, a restroom break, or help with a problem. This technique establishes expectations for appropriate communication and helps to minimize disruptions during class.
- + Props is the act of publicly recognizing and praising students who have done something good, such as answering a difficult question or helping a peer. Props is done by the entire class and is typically a short movement or spoken phrase. The technique is intended to establish a group culture in which learning accomplishments and positive actions are socially valued and rewarded.
- + Nonverbal Intervention is when teachers establish eye contact or make gestures that let students know they are off-task, not paying attention, or misbehaving. The helps teachers efficiently and silently manage student behavior without disrupting a lesson.
- + Positive Group Correction is a quick, affirming verbal reminder that lets a group of students know what they should be doing.
- + Do It Again is used when students do not perform a basic task correctly, and the teacher asks them to do it again the correct way. This technique establishes and reinforces consistent expectations for quality work.

Putting It All Together

Keep it simple - plan ways to include students in making decisions about setting up the classroom, storing materials, assigning duties, and all other elements that create the feeling of community. Resists anything that seems too complex.

Adjust routines and procedures that aren't working - this is a necessary step, and you should always include students in these types of decisions. Review your decisions often, and remember that one of the goals of a classroom community is teaching students how to make decisions and take responsibility. They will learn these skills only through experiences, both positive and negative.

Learn to be responsive instead of reactive - both teachers and students must respond to situations rather than react to them. As teacher, you have the opportunity to model this behavior. It is helpful to talk to students about the differences between responding and reacting and help them recognize that their responses are choices over which they have deliberate control.

Celebrate things that are working - stop and celebrate procedures and student responses that support the general community. Focus on specific behaviors that support the good of the whole class.

Add new elements slowly - make sure that new elements are carefully explained and modeled. Give students guided practice in any new routines or activities. Stop and evaluate new elements before adding more. Remember that this entire project is a process.

Keep administrators and parents informed - the support of administrators and parents is vital to a community of learners. They need to understand what you are doing and why. Verbalize your goals. They can help clear barriers and problem solve when you need help. Excerpt taken from (Herrell & Jordan, 2007)

Building a personal system of teaching and discipline gives one an effective approach to working with all students no matter what their age or background. This creates the likelihood of the following:

- + An effective environment for learning
- + A heightened student sense of purpose
- + Increased learning
- + A joyful, satisfying experience in school
- + Student self-control
- + Student responsibility

References and Resources

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Classroom Management Strategies Resource Guide <https://www.prevention.org/resources/sapp/documents/ClassroomManagementStrategies.pdf>