



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Classroom management is not the same as discipline. Classroom management is the establishment of procedures that will help students know what to do and what is expected of them. Often misbehavior is a result of students not understanding expectations. Your best defense is a good offense. Plan your procedures and lessons carefully because engaged students are less likely to misbehave.

Before problems arise:

- Get to know your students. This will help you anticipate problem situations. A trauma-informed approach may help avoid triggers that lead to misbehavior.
- Show courtesy to every student, and display trust and confidence in all of them.
- Be consistent in the application of discipline and be fair in your requirements and assignments.
- Teaching strategies and an attractive classroom reinforce a mutually respectful relationship with your students.
- Give clear verbal and written directions.
- Keep your classroom cheerful and orderly.
- Make learning fun, interesting, and relevant to the students' lives.
- Be careful about what rules you establish – no one likes rules that don't make sense or seem arbitrary.

- It's okay to explain to students that while you may not agree with a school rule or policy, you will need to enforce it.
- Establish no more than five classroom rules with student ownership—and enforce them.
- Be fully prepared every day.
- Provide a list of expectations and consequences to parents and students. Make sure they are consistent with district and building policies.
- Begin class on time and in a precise manner.
- Let the students know you care. Show interest in what they say, whether or not it pertains directly to the lesson. But don't allow them to use that tactic to derail instruction.
- Keep your voice at a respectful level.
- Grade assignments and return them as soon as possible. Make the assignments meaningful. No one likes busy work.
- Make sure all students can easily see you when you are presenting information. Ensure that all students can see you as you deliver instruction.
- Keep potential distractions—such as windows, doors, cell phones, or animals—in mind.
- Leave plenty of room around desks so you can get to each student easily while you are monitoring individual work.
- Diversion and restructuring are great tools. When one activity has gone too long, students get bored and restless. Stay alert, anticipate trouble, and change your strategy even if it requires some flexibility in scheduling.
- Some students may encourage each other to get into trouble. Regrouping the students immediately without comment is key.
- Provide hurdle help. Sometimes when a student cannot proceed with a task in which they are experiencing difficulty, you may provide an explanation or a “hint” that enables the student to go on.
- It is sometimes helpful to remind students to control their impulses when

they may be tempted to misbehave. Show encouragement. Tell the student, “This has been such a good day; you read so well this morning . . . Come on, let’s keep that up.” Students work better if they anticipate some positive activity or experiences as a reward. However, the promise should be extra, rather than the only incentive for good behavior.

- Class goals and rewards can provide encouragement (i.e., extra free time...)

After a Problem Arises:

- Allow a student to tell you his or her side of the situation. Be willing to consider mitigating circumstances.
- If you’ve made a mistake, admit it, and apologize.
- Make sure consequences are appropriate for the misbehavior.
- Signal a student through a gesture, look, or brief signal that their actions are unacceptable.
- Provide a transition period of drawing, singing, etc. that releases tension after an exciting or tense experience.
- Sometimes a student may do something impulsively and is not sure what the teacher will do as a consequence. React with humor and understanding; the student will be greatly relieved and assured of being accepted.
- When a student is about to explode in anger, tears, or uncontrolled laughter, he/she may need to be removed from the situation so that he/she can gain control of himself/herself. You may use some pretext, such as asking the student to run an errand, help with some task, or get a drink of water.
- Don’t talk about the problems encountered except to those who have a right to know.
- Don’t argue with students.
- Don’t accuse, threaten, or humiliate a child.
- Don’t use school work as punishment.
- When attractive nuisances, such as yo-yos or balls, are confiscated, it is wise to tell the student that the situation is temporary and that the student can

reclaim his/her possession later when it is not distracting to the class.

- Constructive criticism should focus on what is required for improvement.
- When teasing becomes more painful than playful or a free-for-all develops, a clear cut “No!” may provide a welcome stoplight to a student who is getting further into trouble than he/she means to.
- Allow students a way to redeem themselves. Let them know that even if the behavior was an issue, you still care about them as an individual. Teach them that an apology goes a long way and is always welcomed.
- If you feel classroom management has been a disaster the first couple of weeks, don’t worry—you still have time to try other practices which may work for your classroom environment.