CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT 101

**REMEMBER:** It is important for the teachers to establish their classroom expectations and consequences at the beginning of the class. It is essential for teachers to be perceived by students as confident, as being in charge, and as being fair.

**Respecting Students:** Remember that each individual student is a person who deserves to be treated with respect regardless of their intellectual abilities, primary language, social training, cultural background, or personal circumstance. Students respect adults who respect them.

**Staying In Control:** It is extremely important for the teacher not to lose their temper or control of their emotions. Teachers should model appropriate behavior even under highly stressful situations. When teachers lose self control, it becomes more difficult to make proper decisions and to retain the respect of students. When teachers lose self control, their behavior often becomes the focus of attention rather than the student's behavior.

**Eye Contact:** Direct eye contact and non-verbal communication are effective classroom management tools, provided that the non-verbal communication doesn't become threatening or intimidating to students.

**Raising Your Voice:** Using different voice inflections in the classroom is appropriate only if it has a legitimate educational purpose, doesn't result in yelling (which is ineffective and abusive), and doesn't demean students.

**Establishing Standards of Conduct:** Letting the entire class know what your expectations are is key to having a successful educational day. "Establishing standards" should be done as early in the day as possible. Teachers need to be firm, fair, and consistent. Setting reasonable standards and consequences and consistent enforcement of these standards is essential in maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment.

**Logical Consequences For Student Behavior:** Students need to understand that if they chose to follow or violate classroom expectations, a correlation exists between their choice and the consequence. Negative student consequences should be logical and in proportion to the seriousness of the violation. Rewards should also be in proportion to students' correct choices. Rewards should have a legitimate educational purpose, and the reward offered should be sufficient enough to motivate students to want to continue making correct choices.

**Positive Reinforcement:** Students, like adults, respond to positive reinforcement better than to sarcasm or use of the negative. Praising desired behavior is much more effective than punishing undesired behavior. Preventive discipline is more effective than reactive discipline.

**Praise and Correction Guides:** It is more powerful and appropriate to correct students one-on-one at every grade level. Students who are corrected in front of their peers often respond by acting out even more. Often the student who is being publicly disciplined will have their peer group rush to their support at the expense of the teacher. A general guideline at the elementary level is "to correct privately and to praise publicly." At the elementary level, it is generally acceptable to praise a particular student in front of other students. At the middle school and high school levels, individual praise normally needs to be done privately, while group praise is done publicly. Praise should always be genuine and never contrived. Normally, individual student praise should not be more than eight (8) to ten (10) words or last more than three (3) to five (5) minutes.
**Surprising Students:** Students need and expect clear direction and predictability. Clear direction and teacher predictability provide a safer and more secure learning environment for students. A disciplinary surprise is usually not only ineffective, it often results in the students perceiving the teacher as being unfair and unreasonable.

**Correlation of Success & Student Behavior:** There is a high correlation between the difficulty of assigned work and student behavior. If the assigned work is too difficult, students may become frustrated and begin to act out. If the assigned student work is too easy, students may easily become bored and also begin to act out. The teacher needs to constantly monitor student learning by walking around the classroom and checking for student understanding. Assisting students who are having difficulty and adjusting the level of difficulty of the work will go a long way to ensure proper classroom management. Increasing the difficulty of the work or providing alternative learning assignments to students who have demonstrated mastery of the assignment will help to prevent boredom and classroom disruptions.

**Proximity & Classroom Management:** There is a direct correlation of distance of the teacher from the student and student behavior. The closer a teacher is to a student, normally, the better the student's behavior. Teachers who walk around the classroom and monitor student conduct usually maintain much better classroom control.

**Supervising Students From The Back Of The Classroom:** Supervising students from the back of the classroom is a highly effective classroom management tool.

**Unoccupied Student Time:** Unoccupied and non-directed student time often results in classroom management difficulties. Teachers should provide learning activities for students to begin working on immediately upon entering the classroom and upon concluding their regular classroom assignments.

**Extinction:** Minor unacceptable student behaviors are often best dealt with by using a technique known as extinction (ignoring minor negative behavior so it is not reinforced by providing desired attention). This technique usually results in minor unacceptable student behavior disappearing. If the undesired behavior persists, the teacher will need to use more direct and forceful disciplinary intervention strategies.

**Isolating Students:** It may be appropriate to isolate a student from other students, due to a pattern of consistent disruptive behavior. Remember that the teacher needs to maintain visual contact and the ability to directly supervise all students.

**Arguing With Students:** Students who disagree with what the teacher is requiring or doing should be encouraged to discuss those concerns privately with the teacher. Students should not be allowed to argue with the teacher in front of other students or to publicly challenge the teacher's authority.

**Use Of Threats:** Teachers should never threaten students with consequences that they are unable or unwilling to deliver. Teachers who make these types of threats are setting themselves up for frustration and failure. Teachers should clearly spell out consequences of student choices and then be prepared to back up their words by consistently enforcing the consequences.

**Listen Before You Discipline:** It is important to listen carefully to students and to consider their point of view before disciplinary action is taken. Listening to students is particularly important when there is a situation where the teacher may not have all the information. The process of listening will not only assist the teacher in making proper decisions, but will often result in a teachable moment for that student.

**Seating Charts:** The ability to call students by name is a very powerful tool in classroom management. The use of a seating chart can be invaluable in helping the teacher to call students by their names.
80-15-5 Discipline Principle

- 80% of the students rarely break the rules. These students come to school ready to learn.
- 15% of the students break the rules on a somewhat regular basis. These students do not blindly accept classroom rules and fight restrictions.
- 5% of the students are chronic rule-breakers and are often out-of-control.

The goal of classroom discipline is to control the 20% of the students who break rules on a somewhat regular basis, without alienating the 80% who come to school ready to learn.

Major Reasons Why Teachers Fail to Implement Their Disciplinary Consequences

- When teachers are not comfortable with the consequences, they may choose not to enforce the consequences.
- Teachers may choose not to enforce their discipline plan when the violation occurs at an inconvenient time or place.
- Teachers feel they are not police and should not have to enforce student discipline.

Proper Disciplinary Reinforcers

- Students need to have a teacher and a classroom environment that is predictable.
- Positive and negative consequences of individual students' choices need to be accurate and predictable, and students need consistent feedback.
- Students need real choices, such as the freedom to choose when assignments can be done throughout the day.
- Students should expect natural and logical consequences resulting from their disciplinary choices.
- Consequences of behavior should be closely aligned to the severity of the student's behavior.

Elements of a Generic Discipline Plan

The discipline plan should be

1. a reminder to students of the discipline expectancies;
2. a warning;
3. a plan of action for improving student discipline;
4. an opportunity to practice desired behavior;
5. a severe consequence clause.

Four Skills for Effective Behavior Management

1. The ability to teach students disciplinary expectations.
2. The ability to get and keep students engaged or on-task.
3. The ability to maintain a high ratio of positive teacher-to-pupil interaction.
4. The ability to respond non-coercedly encourages appropriate behavior.
In Order for a Teacher to Establish Effective Student Discipline, the Following Elements Should Be Present:

- A high ratio of positive teacher-to-pupil interactions.
- A student's behavior should not be allowed to direct the teacher's behavior.
- The teacher should ignore minor, inappropriate behavior that is inconsequential.
- The teacher should never threaten consequences that he/she cannot or is unwilling to carry out.
- The teacher should stop and then redirect students to the appropriate behavioral choices.
- Teachers should not ask students why they did something.
- Teachers should recognize and reinforce positive changes in student behavior.

In order to correct the class, whenever possible, teachers should find a student engaging in positive and desired behavior, and then provide that student with positive recognition, as opposed to recognizing those students who are not meeting the proper standard of conduct.

TEN VARIABLES THAT AFFECT DISCIPLINARY COMPLIANCE

1. Descriptive requests are better than ambiguous ones.
2. Positive requests for a student to start an appropriate behavior are better than negative requests to stop a misbehavior.
3. The use of questions instead of direct requests reduces compliance.
4. It is better to give the same request only twice than to give it several times.
5. It is better to make a request from up close (0-3 feet) than from longer distances (10 feet or from across the room).
6. Making eye contact helps to convey the message.
7. It is better to make a request in a soft, firm voice rather than in a loud voice.
8. Give the student time to comply after giving a request (5 to 10 seconds). During this short interval, do not converse with the student; rather, look at the student, restate the request if required, and wait for compliance.
9. It is better to respond to behavior in a calm and matter-of-fact way rather than to respond in an emotional way such as yelling, giving an ultimatum, etc.
10. It is easy to request a behavior from a student and then ignore the positive result. If you want more compliance, genuinely reinforce it!