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Alternatives-to-Suspension Fact Sheet: Effective Classroom Management Practices

Classroom management strategies are universal practices that are powerful in increasing student achievement (Kratochwill, 2014; Hattie, 2012). These practices help to build a sense of community and foster relationships between teachers and students and among students. Effective classroom management strategies help to prevent student misbehavior and missed instructional time.

Foster Positive Relationships in the Classroom Community (Hattie, 2012)

- Positive, empathetic teacher-student relationships are powerful moderators of classroom management
- Welcome students to class by name and encourage classmates to greet each other.
- Call or send positive notes home to acknowledge positive behavior.
- Learn about students' strengths and needs, interests, families and accomplishments outside of school.
- Build positive relationships among students by providing opportunities for group work.
- Create the sense that teacher and all students are working together to learn and grow.

Establish an Inclusive Classroom Environment (APA, 2008)

- Use and reinforce language that is respectful, gender neutral, and free of bias.
- Learn about and honor cultures that are represented in your classroom.
- Select curricular materials that reflect the cultures and life experiences of the students.
- Hold high expectations and provide high levels of support for all students.
- Ensure instruction is matched to students' skill level.
- Encourage and expect participation from all students.
- Provide additional support to the students who need it.

Make Data-Based Decisions to Support Positive Behavior

- Collect and maintain data on student behavior.
- Examine student behavior data by:
 - Time of day
 - Time of year
 - Location
 - Type of task
 - Day of the week
 - The students who are involved
- Use data to identify positive classroom management strategies that effectively support classroom engagement and strategies to address potential problems.
- Monitor data to evaluate the effectiveness of the classroom management strategies.

Teach, Review and Reinforce Clear Expectations (Newcomber, 2009)

- State classroom behavior expectations positively (e.g., raise your hand).
- Establish and maintain consistent behavioral expectations and procedures.
- Teach behavior expectations in the context and in the location that they occur.
- Remind students of expectation prior to the routine or context.
- Monitor student behavior and provide frequent and specific feedback.
- Praise or reinforce students for following expectations.
- Provide at least four positive comments for every directive or corrective comment.
- Review procedures/expectations periodically and preventatively.

Optimize the Physical Space of the Classroom (Newcomber, 2009)

- Arrange furniture to allow easy traffic flow and make high traffic areas easily accessible.
- Ensure that students are supervised in all areas.
- Ensure that seating arrangements and lighting are conducive to work.

Create Routines for Common Activities/Tasks (Newcomber, 2009)

- Working in groups vs. independently.
- Communicating with students and families.
- Turning in homework, grading, and returning homework to students.
- Getting permission to use the restroom, go to the nurse, etc.
- Getting and returning classroom materials.

Provide Engaging Instruction (Kratochwill, 2014; Newcomber, 2009)

- Establish clear learning goals and encourage higher-order thinking skills.
- Vary the method (lecture, audio, and video) and response format (group versus individual).
- Vary response type (oral, written, active).
- Move around the room, scan the room and interact with students.
- Positively and warmly acknowledge effort and participation.
- Use media and technology.

Responding to Potential Problems (Newcomber, 2009)

- Identify the issue and act quickly, calmly, and maintain emotional objectivity.
- Make simple, positively stated requests to help develop the child's self-control and self-regulation skills.
- Acknowledge students who are engaging in appropriate behavior.
- Identify the function of the behavior and any related skill deficits.
- Develop a plan that addresses the function and skill deficits with the student.
- Teach, model and reinforce skills or replacement behaviors.
- Recognize the student's positive attempts at changing behavior.
- Objectively follow school procedures for major behavior problems.
- Preserve student's dignity.

References:

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For more information, see the Alternatives-to-Suspension Fact Sheets on the Minnesota Department of Education website or contact Cindy Shevlin-Woodcock at (651) 582-8656 or cindy.shevlin-woodcock@state.mn.us