

## **Research Brief**

### **Classroom Management for New Teachers**

**Question:** What strategies are successful for helping new teachers manage their classroom?

**Summary of Findings:** Educators create the culture of success in schools through the effective implementation of classroom management and discipline. Creating a proactive learning environment relies heavily on the training of new teachers in classroom management. Having new teachers find a management style which is consistent within the culture of the school and in which the teacher feels confident can be a process of many missteps much self-evaluation. However, once a new teacher can adequately implement a classroom management plan, they can create an environment in which students can feel safe and more motivated to learn.

Some of the research on classroom management has found that teachers feel more in control and more competent when they have a formal plan for discipline and procedures (Charles, 1992). Thus, when new teachers can focus less on discipline they can shift their attention to refining a methodology that bolsters higher achievement. Good and Brophy (1984) investigated teacher's basic skills and efficacy and found that many teachers felt their worth as a teacher was directly related to their success of implementation of management skills. However, one of the major concerns of new teachers and their principals is that many preservice programs contain very little preparation in classroom management skills, which can result in new teachers feeling inadequate when it comes to implementing a successful management plan. Many times it takes the community of a school and the guidance of the principal to expose new teachers to the critical features of a successful classroom management plan.

School leaders and researchers have now begun to work together in order to find the best practices for creating high ranking schools, and they are finding that modern schools are considerably different than schools of the recent past. Contemporary public schools tend to have larger class sizes with more ethnically diverse populations, more complex family issues influencing the students, and a myriad of distractions ranging from higher security standards, school violence, terror threats, and use of illicit drugs. School leaders now have increased pressures of school accountability, imminent threat of teacher burn out, and increased scrutiny from the public. Nevertheless, many leaders are stepping up to the new challenges of their schools and taking the knowledge from the expanding research base in classroom management to create schoolwide discipline plans that new teachers can implement quickly and use consistently.

**Related Findings:**

- Based on Kagan's (1992) analysis of forty studies on professional growth, change in new teachers can only come from a restructuring of their prior beliefs.
- Woolfolk (1995) found that past learning might create barriers to the learning of new material and procedures. Thus, new teachers may have difficulty implementing new models of classroom management because previous knowledge and experiences with other forms of management inhibit new learning.
- Many inexperienced teachers have stated that they had an insufficient repertoire of classroom management strategies to use when faced with a misbehaving student (Tucker, Plax, and Kearney, 1985)
- When teachers learn to effectively implement classroom management strategies and discipline they can engage students in learning activities for more than 90 percent of allocated time (Cangelosi, 1990, pp. 13-20)

### **Developing Effective Classroom Management for New Teachers:**

#### **Identifying the Problem Areas**

- Reflect on classroom organization, lesson preparation, and classroom routines in order to recognize management areas that need refining
- Find a mentor who is able to provide feedback and guidance on a daily basis
- Pinpoint difficulties in activating discipline plans with individual students and with the class as a whole
- Choose 1 or 2 procedures from classroom management resources and create realistic goals for their implementation
- Take a classroom management self-assessment to observe any bias or inhibitions towards particular discipline styles
- Shadow special education and expert teachers to observe their use of techniques in problem situations; record observations in journal and discuss them with your mentor teacher
- Take a video of your own classroom instruction, then watch with a mentor who can provide feedback on performance

#### **Specific Implementation**

- Rules should be posted so all students can see them and be reminded of what is expected
- Rules should be brief and stated in terms of observable behavior
- Stay on a routine and be consistent with implementation of discipline plan so that students can observe that procedures are enacted fairly at all times
- Re-organize desks and classroom materials to reduce distractions
- Monitor lesson planning to make sure there is enough activity for each class to keep inactivity to a minimum and to assure smooth transitions from activity to activity.

#### **General Considerations for New Teachers and their Principal**

- Involve parents in the discipline plan so that the teacher can feel they have support from home
- Model behavior in interactions with students that display patience and maturity
- Develop a proactive attitude that takes responsibility for student behavior and avoid habits of blaming students for all classroom management difficulties
- Students tend to respond positively to honesty and sincerity
- Allow appropriate amount of time for teacher to adjust to new surroundings, new demands of job, and new classroom management plan
- Implement uniform schoolwide discipline plan to maintain consistency and fairness

### **Classroom Management and Learning**

- Most students will be motivated to learn when they can relate to the material
- Multiple strategies will most likely appeal to the variable learning styles of modern students
- Cooperative learning and group projects allow students to socially interact in a constructive direction; plan group activities carefully to minimize the potential for disruption
- Students respond to open-ended assignments and tasks that allow them to engage their interests
- Have clear opening rituals that announce the beginning of instruction and focus students on the learning tasks at hand

### **Online Resources:**

[www.masterteacher.com](http://www.masterteacher.com)

Products, Publications, Training, and Free Resources for Teachers

[www.iloveteaching.com](http://www.iloveteaching.com)

Using online materials to help encourage new and veteran teachers, preservice and student teachers

[www.teach-nology.com/teachers/methods/management](http://www.teach-nology.com/teachers/methods/management)

Provides links to valuable classroom management resources

[http://db.education-world.com/perl/browse?cat\\_id=1846](http://db.education-world.com/perl/browse?cat_id=1846)

Education World's Classroom Management site. Scroll down through these listings; some are obviously in the wrong category, but most are very helpful.

<http://www.nea.org/tips/library.html>

Works 4 Me – classroom management and teaching tips from the members of NEA.

<http://7-12educators.about.com/od/discipline/>

<http://www.educationpartnerships.org/>

About.com provides links to excellent resources for teachers on all aspects of teaching, including classroom management.

[www.e-lead.org/library/links.asp?ResourceID=25](http://www.e-lead.org/library/links.asp?ResourceID=25)

Available resources that improve school culture

[www.jc-schools.net/tutorials/classroom/management.htm](http://www.jc-schools.net/tutorials/classroom/management.htm)

Printable forms and helpful links for the proactive teacher

[www.educationworld.com/a\\_admin/admin/admin299.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin299.shtml)

Advice and resources for developing classroom management superstars

[http://www.education-world.com/a\\_curr/curr161.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr161.shtml)

Speaking of Classroom Management: An Interview with Harry Wong

[www.glc.k12.ga.us/ProDev/link.asp?ResourceID=89&PathID=43](http://www.glc.k12.ga.us/ProDev/link.asp?ResourceID=89&PathID=43)

This site provides a classroom management tutorial and other online materials for the beginning teacher

[www.teachers.net/mentors/classroom\\_management](http://www.teachers.net/mentors/classroom_management)

A discussion board for teachers to exchange about classroom management

[www.nea.org/tips/manage/behavior.html](http://www.nea.org/tips/manage/behavior.html)

Practicing teachers post tips and ideas for common behavior problems such as time on task and noise level

[www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/5/cu9.html](http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/sirs/5/cu9.html)

Compilation of research on effective disciplinary practices which includes recommendations for schools and teachers

[www.temple.edu/CETP/temple\\_teach/cm-routi.html](http://www.temple.edu/CETP/temple_teach/cm-routi.html)

A chart providing descriptions and procedures for classroom management

[www.nea.org/helpfrom/growing/works4me/library.html](http://www.nea.org/helpfrom/growing/works4me/library.html)

More help from expert teachers focusing on classroom organization and procedures

[www.honorlevel.com/techniques.html](http://www.honorlevel.com/techniques.html)

A list of eleven successful classroom management techniques which includes descriptions and examples of each.

### References

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