

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE: THE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LABORATORY HIGH SCHOOL (PUPLHS) EXPERIENCE

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Managing the classroom and establishing effective discipline, so as to promote learning have always been the concern of teachers. However, despite years of concentrated study concerning the relationship of classroom control by the teacher and academic achievement by the student, there is no single set of guidelines established for the classroom teacher. In fact, the more we study classroom management and student discipline, the clearer it becomes that discipline is a situational phenomenon, ie; there are no universal prescriptions for student control under all circumstances (Gallup, 1984).

Classroom Management and Discipline

Classroom management and classroom discipline are not the same. Management is a broader idea and is generally directed towards effective learning. Discipline, by contrast, is a concept used in the context of responding to student misbehavior.

Discipline in schools is a strong concern for parents and teachers alike. In most cases of surveys for parents, school discipline has been identified as the most serious problem facing education. Good classroom management answers the problem of discipline in the classroom. If the teacher is a very good classroom manager, no disciplinary problem would occur.

A generally accepted instructional theory holds that the teacher is the key variable within the classroom. What the teacher does affects, directly and proportionately, what students do and the way they act. To develop an effective approach to discipline, the teacher must first consider what he or she wants the student to do and how the student can learn a discipline pattern. What does the

teacher want from the student attention, participation, correct answers, creativity? How do students learn by reacting to something the teacher does, independent of the teacher's action, or through a mix of teacher behavior and their own experience?

There are different approaches for handling discipline. It is a fact that classroom management is a complex process in which teacher response is a matter of philosophy and style. The teacher should be aware of some common preventive measures, explore the establishment of rules in the classroom, and have an orientation of some factors that can influence student behavior. Ultimately, the teacher must design his own approach to classroom management in a style that fits his personality and instructional intentions.

Teachers with very good classroom management and excellent classroom discipline have secrets of success and prescribe the following (Goodland, 1994):

- Show a caring attitude towards your students
- Listen to the students when they tell you their concerns
- Know as many first names as you can as early as you can
- Avoid sarcasm or nagging; try to be positive
- Smile often and cultivate a friendly, but respectful relationship
- Know your students
- Ignore minor infractions when possible
- Try to avoid any kind of group punishment
- Keep records of incidents to refer to later.
- Make classroom discipline a primary goal.

There are specific techniques that have been found helpful in teaching:

- Be on time and start the class immediately. Have something for students to do.
- Have a lesson plan and inform students about the order that it will take place.
- Try to keep the same rules and apply them consistently.
- Vary the types of classroom activities.
- Never threaten a student, as a threat may be perceived as a dare or a challenge.
- Try to make assignments that are appropriate for your students. This will minimize the frustration that can lead a discipline problem.
- Control your voice. It is better to wait for the students to calm than to try to shout over the noise for control.
- Be strict in the beginning and then loosen up when the relationship has been established.
- Avoid favoritism among students.
- Confer with parents as often as possible. This is the behavior most students fear the most.

PUPLHS Experience

The Polytechnic University of the Philippines Laboratory High School (PUPLHS) is a secondary school unit of the University that serves as a teacher training institution for students pursuing a Bachelor in Business Teacher Education, as well as students taking courses with education subjects. It is a 52 years old institution and it is implementing a commercial curriculum for about five hundred and fifty students every school year.

Keeping in mind the philosophy and mission of the university, the PUPLHS (Polytechnic University of the Philippines Laboratory High School) is committed to help its students achieve a well-balanced education, demonstrate their awareness of social conditions, affirm their concern for social justice, as well as recognize and perform their role as Filipino citizens.

The PUPLHS envisions itself as a creative and a dynamic center of excellence for commercial secondary education and a teacher training institution for secondary education major in business technology. More importantly, the PUP Laboratory High School just like any

secondary schools supports the objective of values and character development of the students.

Mission

- Inculcate a strong sense of nationalism and social consciousness and develop spiritual and moral uprightness;
- Democratize access to secondary education; Promote competence and excellence among members of the academia;
- Emphasize the advancement of the unique commercial curriculum which equip the students with basic office and entrepreneurial skills;
- Further upgrade business skills thru knowledge connectivity using information and communication technology.

Objectives

- Produce high school graduates who are prepared for college courses in the fields of business, engineering, mass communications, humanities, education, social sciences, and others;
- Develop high school graduates who are ready for employment as junior office workers, bookkeepers, typists, stenographers, sales personnel, encoders;
- Equip high school graduates with skills for self-employment through their practical and industrial arts classes.

Core values

- P - Prosperity
- U - Unity
- P - Peace
- L - Loyalty
- H - Honesty
- S - Sincerity

Classroom Management and Discipline in PUPLHS

In PUPLHS, the teachers are assigned to handle a subject in their fields of specialization as well as to take care of an advisory class in one school year. It is expected that as a subject teacher, he not only prepares his students to learn the subject matter but help the student to develop

values and mold the best character in him. As an adviser, it is hoped that more lessons and experiences would be provided by the teacher to the students for the same purpose. To do this, the teachers are expected to make the rules and identify the behaviors that are acceptable to him in his teaching. What, for instance, are the behaviors that are acceptable to him in his teaching? Which behaviors would constitute a nuisance? What behaviors does he consider unacceptable? Which of these behaviors does the student need help with? etc.

The teacher assigned as a class adviser is provided a copy of his duties and responsibilities by the school administrator. One of his duties is to meet his class once a week or even more to discuss about his expectations from the students and identify together with the students the rules and behaviors in and out of the classroom. After the lists of such behaviors are identified, behaviors that vary from teacher to teacher and subject to subject, and even from day to day, must be clarified for their students. In an attempt to enforce the rules and regulations by whatever method the teacher wishes to use, it is his responsibility to communicate these rules and expected behaviors, to the students. Further, the subject teacher as well as the class adviser should compare their list with those developed schools and discuss it with their colleagues. Most teachers find that only a few rules are more effective than many rules, and the rules should be relevant to his instructional intentions. It is also anticipated that the teacher places additional requirements on his students in the classroom if is necessary.

Moreover, the students are provided with handbook by the school that spells out the policies, rules and regulations in and outside the classroom. Part of this is given below:

Behavior inside and outside the Classroom

- Students who are in their classroom before 7:30 should engage themselves in silent study.
- Each student should attend classes with the necessary materials needed in his class work.
- A student should keeps his school and classroom clean at all times.

- A student should observes proper behavior at all times. He should observe silence in line formation and while passing, especially when classes are going on.
- If the teacher is late, the students should wait quietly. When the teacher comes in, they should stand to greet him. But if the teacher is late for 15 minutes, the students should inform the Principal's Office.
- Students should not interrupt when the classes is in session. They may however, make announcements when the Principal gives them permission to do so.
- During class or study period, students should refrain from eating, combing hair, and having private conversations.
- Students are not allowed to bring cell phones to school.
- Students should vacate their classrooms after their last period, and see to it that they do not leave any personal belonging inside their classroom.
- Curfew time on campus is 5:30 p.m. Students who find it necessary to stay on campus beyond this time should secure permit from the Principal's Office, provided that they have a written consent from their parents that they will be going home late that particular day.

Conduct During Assemblies

- While waiting for the assembly or convocation to begin, students may speak in a low tone of voice to those near them. But they should refrain from shouting, leaving their places unnecessarily and making conspicuous gestures.
- When the person of highest rank enters, they should stand.
- They should accord the lecturer or speaker due respect or courtesy. The best way to do this is to listen to him attentively. Students must not chat nor do their homework during convocations and assemblies.
- Students should applaud properly. They should not accompany their applause with "yeah" or "more" or any other remark.

- Boisterous laughter, whistling, hissing, stamping of feet, side comments, etc. are out of place.
- Cell phones are not allowed.
- When the assembly is over, the students should stand till the guest and the school officials leave the assembly hall.

Serious Offenses

- The school considers certain acts as serious offenses subject to official warning:
 1. Truancy
 - Leaving the campus/classroom without permission during school hours.
 - Cutting classes.
 - Gallivanting.
 - Leaving the residence in school attire but not reporting to class.
 2. Vandalism
 - Writing on walls, tables, chairs, etc.
 - Spoiling or destroying school property.
 - Destroying notices of the school bulletin boards or displays.
 - Littering on campus.
 3. Forgery
 - Tampering with, falsifying or causing the falsification of letters/signatures in the Report Cards and or any official documents like registration cards, transcript of records, ID, certifications, and other documents of similar nature or purpose.
 4. Insubordination to School Authorities
 - Instigating others to insubordination.
 - Provoking incidents harmful to the good name of the school.
 - Propagating false orders.
 - Acts of defiance against teachers and school authorities.
 5. Dishonesty, such as cheating during any examination, quiz, or test and plagiarism in connection with any academic work.
 - Direct or indirect involvement in examination leakage.
 - Copying from another's examination papers or allowing another to copy from one's examination Paper.
 - Having somebody else take the examination for him (in which case both shall be liable hereunder).
 - Passing one's own work any assigned report, term paper, case analysis, reaction paper and the like copies from another.
 - Connivance with other students to changing the answer into correct ones while checking the paper.
 6. Verbal abuse
 - Insulting others.
 - Calling others by derogatory names.
 - Swearing (use of obscene or propaganda language).
 7. Carrying of any deadly weapons, such as firearms, explosives, icepicks, knives, and the like within the University premises.
 8. Possession or use of drug.
 9. Brawls on campus or at off-campus school functions.
 10. Theft or damage to property of the University or of an individual person.
 11. Gambling, betting or similar engagement in any game of chance within the school premises.
 12. Smoking, drunkenness or being on school premises in a state of intoxication.
 13. Deliberate disruption of an academic function or school activity which tend to put any member of the faculty, administration or non-teaching staff in ridicule or contempt.
 14. Hazing in all organizations.
 15. Bribery/extortion.
 16. Scandalous display of affection; and
 17. Such other acts unbecoming of a high school student as may hereinafter be determined by the University authorities.
 - The students must be informed in writing of the nature

of any accusation against them, and they shall have the right to answer the charges against them.

- All offenses shall be reported to the parents or guardians of the offender through the Guidance Counseling Office or Principal's Office.
- The evidence must be considered by the investigating committee designated by the school authorities to hear and decide the case.
- Appropriate disciplinary sanctions for non-observance of the University norms shall be provided. Such sanctions shall take the form of:
 - warning
 - reprimand
 - probation
 - suspension
 - expulsion
 - any other sanction/s as may be recommended by the Guidance Counselor or Principal

Concluding Statements

School discipline is more complex today than in the past because learning is also more complex. Most successful teachers would probably add that what works for them

may not work for all teachers. They might tell that they adjust their discipline approach for different kinds of groups, and that they are still perfecting their systems of classroom management. In short, there is no single approach to successful discipline. Rather, it can be administered by teachers who plan for it, and who have a pattern of discipline. New and experienced teachers must master sophisticated management techniques to ensure satisfactory classroom discipline. The best advice for the teachers concerning discipline is "*know what you want to happen before it occurs.*"

References

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