

Classroom Management Final Paper

Madisyn Waltman

University of May

Classroom management was a topic I had not considered much as a future teacher until I took this course. With having learned what I have about managing my future classroom, I have come to discover that any preconceived ideas I had about this topic were largely inaccurate. Upon reading our class text, *Conscious Discipline* by Dr. Becky Baily, and attending class lectures and discussions, I have formulated my own classroom management philosophy that I will implement in my future classroom to provide the best learning environment for students.

My classroom management philosophy is based upon conscious discipline within the classroom. Students in my classroom will learn and implement daily procedures that are based upon safety, connections, and problem-solving with their fellow classmates. The concept of conscious discipline allows each student to learn how to self-regulate their physical and emotional states within the classroom to ensure that the students and teacher feel safe (Bailey, 2014). Safety is the number one priority for me as an educator, so the use of conscious discipline within my classroom allows students to develop self-regulation techniques that they can use in my classroom and during the rest of their lives as well. Putting the responsibility of safety on the students allows them to play a vital role in the safety of our classroom, not just the teacher.

Connections in the classroom will be formed to encourage a school family, help each other be successful, and to change our classroom perceptions about conflict (Bailey, 2014). Forming these types of connections within the classroom is vital for students to create relationships with their classmates and the teacher. Creating a new perception on how to handle conflict in the classroom can lead to more positive based conversations about what we can learn from conflict, rather than focusing on the negatives and consequences that often arise from conflict. Problem-solving will be used to view conflict as an opportunity to learn and acquire new social-emotional skills that allow students to be resilient within the classroom. These skills

are ones that students can take with them beyond the classroom as they grow, hopefully giving each student a deeper meaning to their time in my classroom.

The first three days of school are absolutely essential to establishing important procedures and expectations that students will be expected to uphold throughout the school year. Because of this, my focus on classroom management during these first three days will address the most crucial procedures that students will need to master in order to be successful, along with instructional activities that will ease students into the curriculum for the school year. The earlier this can be done, the better. See Appendix A for the complete plan for the first three days of school in my classroom. While this plan covers everything that I would ideally like to teach, rehearse, and reinforce during these first three days, it is important to recognize that as a first year teacher, my days will more than likely not go as planned. With that being said, it will be important to adapt to each day and situation to how the students are responding to this new environment. Pushing them too much could appear exclusively authoritative, causing the classroom to be an area of rules and regulations. I want students to feel safe, welcomed, and comfortable in my classroom so that they can ultimately learn and develop as students. Being observant and empathetic towards my students during these first three days will lead to greater success throughout the school year.

In order to get an even sooner jump on these critical first three days, a letter will be sent home to the student and their families, see Appendix B for the complete letter. This letter home will highlight some of the basic procedures and expectations that the students will be learning during the first three days, along with important contact information and dates, supplies, and some information about me that helps the students get to know me a little better before we meet on the first day. In an extension to the content of the letter, the main purpose of this letter is to

allow the student and their family to feel welcome by me as the teacher before they begin the school year in the classroom. It is important to keep the parents/guardians involved in their child's education, as this has been shown to lower dropout rates and increase the academic performance of the student (Mapp, 2004).

The process of establishing the classroom family is also very important within the first few days of school. While this can be a little more difficult than teaching procedures, its benefits can have a significant impact on the functionality, empathy, and teamwork within our classroom. See Appendix C for a complete list of methods to establish the classroom family. The purpose of these methods/structures is to transform the leadership within the classroom from an industrial, power oriented, and competitive model, to a relational, trusting, cooperative, and shared power model (Bailey, 2014). While there are eight specific aspects to the school family, as displayed in Appendix C, each method attempts to incorporate a few of the aspects into our classroom. Over time, the hope is that these practices become rituals for the students, meaning they become a concept of unity for the class throughout the school year (Bailey, 2014).

The structure and organization of the classroom also plays a very vital role in creating a positive learning environment for the students. My classroom setup is based upon collaboration, providing students with zones of learning, bringing the outdoors into the classroom, and allowing for self-regulated learning. Please see Appendix D for a complete classroom layout. While classroom management is not exclusively reliant upon the physical set-up of the classroom, it can be aided in its execution of procedures based on resources and layout of the classroom. Just as it is important for students to have choice in their learning, I also feel it is important for them to have choice in their own classroom, leading to the incorporation of multiple types of seating and seating areas, and various different resources that allow them to explore the content on their

own. Through this classroom setup, students can feel calm, focused, and ready to engage with the academic material.

Having a classroom management philosophy, a plan for the first three days, and methods/structures to establish the classroom family and environment is a good start to creating a successful and welcoming classroom. However, these plans can only go so far. Each student in the classroom will respond differently to their environment and will have very different behavioral temperaments, social-emotional awareness, and varying levels of cognitive and executive functioning. It is important to recognize that there will be students who will prove challenging from a classroom management standpoint. Because of this, I believe it is important to have back up plans in place for students who may exhibit behavioral problems in the classroom.

First and foremost, a teacher must understand that the student's behavior is never about the teacher. There are various underlying psychopathologies, emotional states, and physiological needs that influence a child's behavior. When encountering a student who is acting out, the teacher must remind themselves that the action is not about them. Doing this will allow the teacher to remain in the executive state of functioning and handle the situation in a much more rational way. The executive state, or the "upstairs brain", will assist the teacher in responding, not reacting, to situations in a relaxed and alert state of mind (Bailey, 2014). Once the teacher has entered into their executive state, they can begin to address the student to move from their emotional or survival state that they are currently reacting in, into the executive state. This can be done by talking to the student in a calm and controlled manner, and saying to them, "make your voice sound like mine." This will allow the student to mimic a calmer state of mind where they can have a productive conversation with the teacher. Once they do this, allow the student to have

a few moments to gather their thoughts, take a few deep breaths, and then address the issue at hand. The use of the executive state of mind is very successful when dealing with students who are displaying inappropriate behavior.

The utilization of the executive state of mind is very effective for solving behavioral situations as they occur, but what about preventing those same behaviors before they play out? Chelonnda Seroyer, in her “First Days of School” presentation, explains that the only way that children can be responsible is if they have procedures and are engaged with the content. If a teacher truly wants to eliminate problem behavior, then preventing situations in which students are not engaged with what they are supposed to be doing must be of high importance. Aside from having the procedures established that have been discussed earlier, student engagement plays a huge role in behavioral prevention. Marzano and Pickering propose that there are four ways in which teachers can engage their students: emotions, interest, perceived importance, and perceptions of efficacy (Marzano & Pickering, 2010). Positive emotions of enthusiasm, pride, enjoyment, and zest are what children should be experiencing when they are engaged with the material. Interest can be accomplished when the content is made relatable, exciting, or invokes curiosity. If the students do not feel that what they are learning is important, then behavioral incidents may occur (Marzano & Pickering, 2010). Lastly, the teacher must introduce the material in ways that shows that they are excited to teach it and that they believe that the students are able to learn. Having various types of plans to deal with potentially problematic behavior before or as they are occurring is an important tool and skill that I as a first-year teacher should be consciously aware of.

Your classroom procedures and methods within your classroom seem to be controllable. Students, however, are part of a larger community, that being their school. Because of this,

students may be exposed to different types of expectations and procedures that can differ from your own classroom. Recognizing this as a teacher is important because it allows you to be aware of what is influencing your students as they are engaging in different areas of the school. Knowing what various teachers, such as PE, Music, and Art expect for procedures within their learning environments will allow you to identify if any behaviors they are performing related to procedures in your class are due to being taught other procedures, which is completely understandable. Acknowledging these differences in classroom management will aid in reinforcing your own procedures, as well as what is expected of the students when they leave your classroom and enter into a different teacher's learning space.

The exploration of classroom management has greatly prepared me for what is expected from me as the teacher in my future classroom. While this part of being an educator can be very difficult for first year teachers, discussing the up's and down's, and even failures, that I will experience within my first few years makes them seem more manageable. Through trial and error of my classroom management philosophy of safety, connections, and problem-solving, I will be able to create the best environment that allows children to learn. The incorporation of effective procedures and the classroom family will further enhance my conscious discipline style of classroom management. Having a classroom set-up based upon collaboration and choice for students will add to a conducive learning environment. Understanding how to deal with behavioral incidents before and as they are happening will be vital to adapting my classroom strategy, as well as anticipating multiple different classroom management strategies that students will be exposed to throughout the rest of the school from other teachers. Incorporating all of these strategies into my classroom will allow my students to understand what is expected of them behaviorally so that they can focus on growing academically.

References

Bailey, B. (2014). *Conscious Discipline: Building resilient classrooms*. Loving Guidance, Inc.: Oviedo, FL.

Marzano, R., Pickering, D. (2010). *The Highly Engaged Classroom*. Solution Free Press.: Bloomington, IN.

Mapp, K. (2004). *Helping Students Graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention*. Eye on Education: Larchmont, NY.

Seroyer, C. (2020). *First Days of School*. Harry K. Wong Publications.

Appendix A

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 0 auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">—○ FIRST 3 DAYS PLAN ○—</p> <p style="margin: 0;">MISS WALTMAN'S 3RD GRADE CLASSROOM</p> </div>	
<p>DAY 1 – CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lining Up ➤ Backpack/Locker Organization ➤ Opening Activity (Circle Meeting) ➤ Getting the class' attention ➤ Desk/Seating Charts ➤ Recess ➤ Getting the teachers attention ➤ Agenda ➤ Bathroom procedure ➤ Lunch ➤ End of Day Dismissal 	<p>DAY 1- INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Desk Name Tags ➤ Site Word Wall ➤ "4 Corners" – Movement Based Get to Know You Game ➤ Math Comprehension Activity ➤ Weekly Words ➤ Share and Care Time ➤ Teacher Trivia ➤ Closing Class Message
<p>DAY 2 – CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/>	<p>DAY 2 – INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review and practice Day 1 Procedures throughout the day ➤ Class Jobs ➤ Library Area expectations ➤ Retrieving supplies ➤ Art Wall ➤ Retrieving/Putting Away Computers ➤ Tardy/Early Dismissal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a Class Contract ➤ Teacher Trivia ➤ Math Pre-Assessment ➤ “All About Me” – Get to Know You Game ➤ Library ➤ Silent Reading Time ➤ Weekly Words ➤ Computer Scavenger Hunt ➤ Site Word Wall ➤ Daily Closing Message
<p>DAY 3 – CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review and practice Day 1 & 2 procedures throughout the day ➤ Group Work ➤ School/Classroom Safety Drills ➤ Class Book Reading ➤ Helping-Hand Jar ➤ Teacher Area ➤ Weekly Take-Home Activities 	<p>DAY 3 – INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Morning Circle Lesson – Teamwork ➤ Small-Group Scavenger Hunt ➤ Class Reading – “The Life of a Plant” ➤ Math, Addition Lesson 1 ➤ Site Word Wall ➤ Day 1 – My Autobiography ➤ Weekly Words ➤ P. E. ➤ Share and Care Time ➤ Daily Closing Message

Appendix B

Hello students and parents/guardians of room 203!

My name is Miss Waltman, and I am so excited to be your teacher for this upcoming school year! I wanted to reach out to you before our first day together to share a little bit of information about myself, some important dates and contact information, supplies list, and some procedures and expectations for our classroom!

Please note the important dates attached to this letter, as well as my contact information.

A full list of school supplies needed for this school year can be found at any local store that sells school supplies. The only special supplies that I ask that your student come prepared with for learning is a set of headphones that they can plug into a computer for listening to videos/playing games. If you need assistance with acquiring any of these supplies, please contact me and I would be more than happy to assist you!

Lastly please note some classroom expectations and procedures that we will be using within our classroom this coming year. I value sharing these with you ahead of time so you can gain a better understanding for what your student will be doing daily within his or her classroom! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me and we can have a discussion!



Hometown: Sioux Falls, SD
 Education: University of Mary
 Hobbies: being outside, spending time with friends and family, golfing, and playing with my two dogs, Bandi and Bella!

Important Dates

8/22/2020	Open House, 6-8pm
8/26/2020	First Day of School
9/14/2020	Community Engagement Night, 6-8pm
9/24/2020	School Book Fair, 5-8pm
10/15/2020	School Wide Bingo Night, 5-7pm
10/22/2020	Conferences Week
11/21/2020	Class Craft Fair
12/19/2020	Winter Class Party



madisyn_waltman@bismarckschool.org



(701) 234-1245



(701) 567-9876

Classroom Facebook Page:

Miss Waltman's 203 Class

I look forward to meeting each of you at our Open House on August 22nd, 2020 and beginning our first day together on August 26th, 2020! Please feel free to reach out to me ahead of time if you have any question or concerns!

Sincerely,
Miss Waltman

IN THIS CLASSROOM, OUR
MAIN FOCUS IS...

- 1.) Safety
- 2.) Connections
- 3.) Problem Solving

SOME EXPECTATIONS
WITHIN OUR CLASSROOM
ARE...

- ❖ My job is to keep you safe; your job is to help me keep you safe
- ❖ Each student is welcome and a part of our school family
- ❖ We use problem solving skills to resolve conflicts
- ❖ Treat each student how you would like to be treated

Appendix C

THE CLASSROOM FAMILY

MISS WALTMAN'S 3RD GRADE CLASSROOM

8 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLASSROOM FAMILY

1. Optimizes brain development
2. Embeds resilience into the school culture
3. Helps heal the cycle that leads from loss to violence
4. Fosters conflict resolution skills
5. Promotes the effectiveness of consequences
6. Models and teaches our highest values
7. Models shared power and democracy
8. Re-ignites the inherent joy of teaching and learning

METHODS/STRUCTURES TO CREATING THE CLASSROOM FAMILY

- Morning Greeting and Afternoon Goodbye
 - Students will be greeted at the door by the teacher and will have the option of doing a high-five, dance, or a salute with the teacher before they enter the classroom. The teacher will mimic those three choices according to what the student picks.
- Celebration/Friends and Family Wall

- Students will be able to decorate their own piece of artwork that displays their name, birthday, and family members. This will be hung on the Celebration Wall so that students can know more about their classmates and celebrate the birthday and families with them.
- Morning Circle Time
 - Each morning, the class will begin their day at the front circle. There will be an activity for the class to participate in once everyone has reached the circle. After the activity, the students will participate in a short lesson directed towards social-emotional awareness. This will allow students to develop more techniques to recognize their internal thoughts and feelings, relate to their classmates, show empathy towards others, and get to know each of their classmates better.
- Helping Hand Jar
 - This jar will be located within the classroom and will have a pen and note pad next to it. Students will be able to write down moments where they witnessed a classmate helping, sharing with, showing empathy, or displaying kindness towards another classmate. At the end of each week, the teacher will take the notes out of the jar and read them out to the class. This will celebrate the students who have been displayed admirable behaviors and lead to a ripple effect throughout the year within the classroom for other students to display the same behaviors.

Appendix D

