

Components of a Classroom Management System

(A compilation of research-based resources and excerpts)

Assignment: Look at the number of your breakout room and find the corresponding section on the document, then make note of 3 things you would like to remember about the text; 2 things you would like to explore or try in your own classrooms; and 1 thing you ponder about or have questions about. Then, share your thoughts with your group and prepare to share highlights in the larger group.

Breakout Rooms 1–2 Establish Inclusive Routines and Procedures

Creating a sense of connectedness between students and their school or program can be a powerful classroom management practice. Students who feel that their peers and instructors care about them as an individual are less likely to engage in risky behaviors, such as early sexual initiation, substance use, violence, and suicide (CDC, 2021).

Having clear classroom expectations and a “warning system” (e.g., giving students a warning that their behavior is inappropriate before directly moving to disciplinary action) can prove to be effective when managing a classroom. It is crucial to consistently apply rules to students, meaning that the focus should be on the behavior, not the student. One-on-one conversations about student behavior that occurs outside of the classroom or away from other students can allow students to feel more comfortable in sharing their frustrations.

Classroom routines can positively affect students’ academic performance and behavior; therefore, one proactive strategy is for instructors to adopt a consistent classroom routine. A routine is simply a set of procedures for handling both daily occurrences (e.g., taking attendance, starting a class period, or completing assignments) and minor interruptions of instruction, such as a student arriving late to class. Essentially, once taught, routines are daily activities that students are able to complete with little or no instructor assistance, which accomplishes two objectives: (a) students have more opportunity to learn and (b) instructors can devote more time to instruction (Kaster, n.d.).

Here are seven classroom procedures to consider:

1. Arrange the physical environment in an orderly manner
2. Define and teach the rules and expectations
3. Define and teach the classroom routines
4. Use active supervision
5. Give praise when appropriate
6. Respond appropriately to challenges
7. Give the students multiple opportunities to respond

Breakout Rooms 3–4 Co-create and Teach Behavioral Expectations

Rather than telling students what NOT to do, a positive classroom management system empowers complete students to have a voice in what they need to do. This clarifies the expectations for students and instructors, reduces “loopholes,” and is more likely to positively impact student behavior.

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Behavioral expectations should be:

- Three to five positively stated behaviors
- Broadly stated and easy to remember
- Consistent with school's or program's vision/mission statement
- Expected of all instructors/students

Instructors teach students the expectations explicitly by giving examples of what does and does not meet expectations. Instructors keep situational appropriateness in mind. Situational appropriateness refers to behaviors that may be expected and acceptable in one setting (e.g., yelling and cheering for your team at a game) but can be unsuitable within a different context, or environment (e.g., a student who is yelling and cheering during academic group work in a classroom). Make it a regular habit of referring to the expectations when speaking with students and addressing behavior concerns.

Breakout Rooms 5–6 Provide/Receive Feedback & Acknowledgement

Positively acknowledging student behavior is associated with positive relationships and increased student achievement. Higher rates of negative feedback predicts suspension and dropout rates. Therefore, the more positive feedback students receive regarding their behavior, the higher the probability they will continue the desired behavior and change negative behavior. Research recommends a 4:1 ratio of positive to corrective (negative) feedback. This can be as simple as “Great job starting your reading right away,” or “I see José is on the correct page.” These kinds of comments let students know they are doing what they are supposed to be doing and encourages other students to mimic the behavior. There is a place for corrective feedback, but it should immediately be followed up with positive feedback when the student corrects the behavior.

Whenever possible, it's good to tie the behavior and feedback to the school or program expectations. For example, if the school or program has “Be Responsible” as an expectation, the instructor might say, “I see you completed your classwork. That's really showing responsibility!”

Tips for acknowledging positive behavior (Vanderbilt University, 2007):

- Give positive responses to the desired behavior and avoid responding when that behavior is not occurring
- Record the number of times the behaviors of interest occur and your response
- Design a plan to acknowledge and reinforce the desired behavior based on students' individual needs

Breakout Rooms 7–8 Embed Restorative Practices

Punitive disciplinary policies very often “aggravate disciplinary problems and exacerbate racial, gender, and socioeconomic status disparities, underlining the need for alternative approaches to the management of discipline, as well as approaches that aim at promoting well-being in the whole school/program community” (Lodi et al., 2021). On the other hand, restorative practices are focused on relationships with the goal of building strong connections that promote positive behavior and class

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climate. Restorative practices provide practices to set clear classroom expectations and provide language for engaging students in conversation, problem-solving, and self-reflection when problems arise.

There are a number of benefits of restorative practices:

- Builds relationships
- Strives to be respectful to all
- Provides the opportunity for equitable dialogue and decision making
- Involves relevant stakeholders
- Addresses harms, needs, obligations
- Encourages all to take responsibility

Restorative conversations should occur:

- Before a disciplinary action
- During the disciplinary/corrective process
- Anytime they would be helpful
- After restorative conversation

Here are a few restorative practices that are beneficial in the classroom:

- Community Building Circles
- Norm Setting
- Restorative Chats/Conversations
- Peer Mediation
- Restorative Circles
- Conflict Resolution
- Social-Emotional Learning

Breakout Rooms 9–10 Use Data to Monitor for Equity

Effective school and program environments help students to be successful. Establishing a positive school and program culture includes setting up the social environment (either intentionally or unintentionally) to reflect a shared vision of common values, beliefs, and behavior expectations. However, for students who are not from the dominant culture, the environment can expose them to unintentional slights that devalue their backgrounds and diminish school and program connectedness. Thus, this environment can either engage students through validation and affirmation of their identity (including their cultures and individual learning histories) or disengage them through these unintentional slights.

These guiding questions for decision-making ensure equity for all:

- Who is in charge of deciding what's "acceptable" or "desired" for children?
- They may provide a chance to correct policies & practices that lead to inequitable outcomes

Building responsive environments requires an understanding of how our schools and programs have been established, how well they support students from varying cultures, and how they can be changed to ensure the support and validation of each student (Rose et al., 2020).

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