

SPARKS – CHECKLIST FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

BEFORE SCHOOL/SEMESTER STARTS:

- Post Classroom Expectations (see expectations)
- Make Sure Classroom is Clean and Organized
- Make Copies of Class Syllabus, Parent Form, and Student Form (see syllabus excerpts)

DURING FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL:

- Hand Out Syllabus and Explain in Detail Major Points (see syllabus excerpts: Behavior Consequences)
- Go Over Classroom Expectations
- As a Class Make Teacher Expectations (see example)
- Do Team Building and Get To Know You Activities (see example)
- Hand Out Student Information Form (see syllabus excerpts)
- Send Home Parent Information Form (see syllabus excerpts)
- Collect Student/Parent Information Form

ON A DAILY BASIS:

- Greet Students Positively at Door
- Keep High Energy During Class
- Use a Variety of Activities During Lessons and Seat Work (see examples)
- Teach To a Variety of Learning Styles (see examples)
- Get Kids Moving
- Try To Keep a High Positive to Negative Comment Ratio (4:1) (see examples)
- Allow Students to Lead Learning By Answering Each other's Questions

ON A MONTHLY BASIS:

- Update Parents on Their Student's Progress (including positive behavior)
- Touch Base with Students Through Individual Conferences
- Try to Go to 3-4 School Wide Functions (ie. games, plays, festivals)
- Spend One Day on Study Skills
- Spend One Day on 'Real World' Problems

AS NEEDED BASED ON BEHAVIOR (Individual):

- Proximity
- Gentle Verbal Reprimands
- Have Individual Meeting with Student
- Assign a Think Sheet (see Think Sheet) and Go Over With Student
- Contact Parents (see example parent contact form)
- Have a Meeting With Student and Parent
- Come up With Academic and Behavior Support Plan (see plan worksheet)
- Refer to Administration

AS NEEDED BASED ON BEHAVIOR (Class):

- Lead Open Classroom Discussion
- Contact Parents of Problem Students
- Come up with Class-Wide Reward System or Other Plan (see example)
- Involve Administration

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

BE RESPECTFUL

Follow Adult Directions
Use Kind Words and Actions
Raise Hand and Wait for Permission to Speak
Respect Others and Their Belongings

BE RESPONSIBLE

Be On Time to Class
Be Prepared with Supplies
Follow Directions the First Time
Complete and Turn In Assignments On Time

BE SAFE

Keep Hands and Feet To Self
Stay in Assigned Seat
Use Classroom Materials and Equipment Appropriately

Sparks- Syllabus Excerpts

Behavior Consequences:

All students are expected to follow the classroom expectations and school rules before, after, and during class. Students that do not follow these expectations/rules will be given consequences based on the chart below. "Moderate" behavior can be defined as incidents that disrupt class and violate classroom expectations. "Severe" behavior can be defined as incidents that put self or others at harm (mental or physical) or gross insubordination.

Moderate Behavior	Severe Behavior
Ex. Late to class, disrespectful, put downs, not doing class work	Ex. Gross insubordination, threatening others, hitting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Warning<input type="checkbox"/> Student-Teacher Conference<input type="checkbox"/> Assigned Think Sheet and Parent Contacted<input type="checkbox"/> Parent-Student-Teacher Conference<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Plan<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Sent to Resource Room for Class Period with Assigned Think Sheet<input type="checkbox"/> Parent Contacted<input type="checkbox"/> Parent-Student-Teacher Conference<input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Plan<input type="checkbox"/> Refer to Administration (any threats or bodily harm will also result in referral)

Parent Information Form: (please give this to your parent to complete by the end of the first week of class)

Dear Parents,

I am looking forward to teaching your children and want to help make them successful in my class. In order to do this I am asking for a little information about yourself and your child. After you have read through the attached syllabus, please send me an email at the email address listed below with the requested information by the end of the first week of class. If you do not have email, please answer the questions and return them with your student in a sealed envelope. If I am able to have your email on file, I will be able to communicate with you test and project dates, progress reports, and behavior updates.

Thanks, Megan Sparks

Please send the requested information in an email to megan.sparks@school.k12.mi.us

- Your name and the name of any other guardians
- Your and other guardians email and phone numbers
- Preferred method of contact regarding behavior (email or phone)
- Any family events or issues that might affect your child at school
- Any diagnosed or undiagnosed learning struggles that your child has
- Any needed accommodations for learning or behavior (ie. seating preference, verbal warnings)
- Any concerns or information that you would like to share about your child
- A statement that says you have read and agree to help enforce the classroom expectations

Student Information Form: (please fill out and return by the end of the first week of class)

Name _____ Grade _____

Nickname (if you prefer to be called) _____

Name of ADULTS you live with _____

Names and relationship of any other people you live with:

Main Language Spoken at Home: _____

Any after school activities you are involved in (sports, clubs, jobs, etc):

Check any of the following statements that apply to you:

I enjoy this subject.

I received a B or better in this subject last year.

I like to work by myself.

I prefer working in partners or groups.

I do better when I can move around.

I learn better from charts, graphs than reading.

I learn better from reading than listening.

I learn better from listening than reading.

I think of myself as creative.

I like attention to be on me.

What is your preferred seat location and why? _____

Please sign below stating that you have read the syllabus and understand the classroom expectations and behavior consequences and agree to follow them.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Sparks- Exercise Examples

Making Teacher Expectations with Class:

After reading through the classroom expectations, explain that these are expectations of everyone in the class including the teacher. However, it is also important to make sure student's needs are being met. As a class let's discuss and make a list of the expectations you have for me as a teacher. Bring out large poster board with the three main titles "Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe" and use it to lead a student based discussion on their expectations for a teacher. Use the headings to divert more extreme suggestions: ie. if they suggest no homework, you can refuse that as saying that would not make you a responsible teacher. When this is finished it can be hung next to class expectations.

Possible Team Building and Get to Know You Activities:

During the first week of school do one to two activities per day that work on team work and getting to know each other. Start with simpler concepts and move on from there. Use this list for ideas.

- Have them arrange themselves in alphabetical order by first name.
- Have them write and share about what they did this summer.
- Have students stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Make statements about interests. If that statement is true about them they must run to the middle of the circle and then find a new spot in the circle.
- In small groups of 3-4, have them do a mind bender puzzle.
- In partners, have them reread what they did this summer and discuss similarities and differences between their summers.
- Create a "river" area in which they have to cross as a team. They have 4 stepping stones (pieces of paper) to get the whole class across. If they let go (some part of their body isn't touching it) of the stone in the river it gets washed away and they lose it. See if they can work together to get the whole class across the river.
- If there is a place on school property, a few built elements could be established.

Possible Options for doing a Variety of Class Activities and Seat Work:

- Doing problems at the board all at once (or half the class at a time depending on board space)
- Using a small white board at their seat and holding up answers
- Working as partners or groups
- Putting a formula or steps to music
- Have students come up with pre-test study activities
- Play BINGO by making bingo cards with different numbers on them. Each time they solve a problem if they have the answer to the problem on their card they can cover it.
- Use, or have them make manipulatives, to demonstrate geometrical concepts or other math concepts
- Ask another student to explain a hard problem.
- Tape a worksheet to each desk. After each problem they need to move to a new worksheet.
- Make students an "expert" of one problem. Make sure they understand and are able to complete their assigned problem. Then have them explain it to the rest of the class (whole/individually).

Possibilities for Teaching to Different Learning Styles:

- Write out facts on the board at the same time of giving verbal instruction (Verbal/Visual)
- Use charts and graphs or pictures to demonstrate verbal explanation (Logical/Visual/Verbal)
- Allow them to decide if they want to work by themselves or in a group (Inter/Intrapersonal)
- Create or allow students to create songs or plays to help remember steps (Musical)
- Create a list of simple steps that emphasize how to solve a problem (Logical)
- Allow students to do work on the board (Kinesthetic)
- Use study buddies to help explain problems to each other (Interpersonal)
- Use or make math manipulatives to assist with solving problems (Kinesthetic)
- Allow students to choose the topic within the assignment or create topics that align with their interests

Examples of Positive Effective Comments:

- Thumbs Up
- Eye Contact
- Smile
- Individual Acknowledgment/Greeting
- High Five
- Use Student Name
- Verbal Encouragement
- Written Encouragement
- Empathetic Listening

Example of a Class-Wide Reward System:

At the beginning of seat work write a number on the board. Students know that this number is their goal number for correct problems per person finished. This number will vary depending on amount of time for seat work and difficulty of problems. Students may ask for help or check answer by raising their hand or looking to a neighbor for help. Have students tally their problems done every few minutes (also give students a break to stretch). Once their goal number is reached the class gets to take a break for the duration of one school friendly song. There will also be a public posting of how many goals they have met so they can have friendly competition between other classes.

Think Sheet

Name _____ Date _____

What did you do to get assigned a Think Sheet?

Is there a reason you acted this way?

What did acting this way help you accomplish?

How did your behavior affect yourself and your classmates?

What could you have done differently?

Is there anything that can help you accomplish this?

Check any of the following that apply:

I don't understand the assigned work.

I am having a bad day.

I am often bored in class.

I feel respected by my teacher.

I care if I do well in this class.

I feel like I can use this class in the future.

To be filled out after meeting with your teacher.

I have thought about my actions and have discussed solutions and consequences to my behavior.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Contact Form

Student's Name: _____ Date: _____

Positive Behaviors:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Turns in Homework on Time | <input type="checkbox"/> Follows Directions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributes to Classroom Discussions | <input type="checkbox"/> Is Making Above Class Average Grades |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asks for help | <input type="checkbox"/> Is Quiet During Seat Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is Prepared for Class | <input type="checkbox"/> Is Kind To Others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Problem Behaviors:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has Missing Assignments | <input type="checkbox"/> Disrupts Class |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Participate | <input type="checkbox"/> Is Not Working Up to Academic Potential |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is Unprepared for Class | <input type="checkbox"/> Creates Distractions During Seat Time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is Disrespectful to the Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Is Disrespectful to other Students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Frequency of Problem Behaviors:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once per Week | <input type="checkbox"/> Two to Three Times per Week |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Once per Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Two to Three Times per Day |

Possible Solutions:

Parent Input:

Parent Contacted: _____ Method of Contact: _____

Parent Conference Set-Up? Yes / No

If Yes, Date: _____

Academic and Behavior Support Plan Worksheet

Discuss the following items with Behavior Support Team: Teachers, Administration, Psychologists, Support Staff, Parents, and Student(s). Use Collected Data to Analyze Behavior, Decide Function, and Set Up a Modification Strategy

- Describe Current Behavior State: Positives and Problems
- Problem Behavior Strengths: Frequency, Duration, Intensity, Uniqueness
- Location(s) Behavior Most Commonly Occurs
- Time(s) Behavior Exhibited At
- What Is Happening at these Time(s)?
- What Should his/her Behavior Look Like?
- Hypothesis Behavior Function: Attention Seeking, Lack of Ability of Skill, Lack of Awareness, Purposeful/Habitual Misbehavior
- Identify Student Strength: At Home, At School, etc.
- Identify Reinforces that Student Responds to
- Brainstorm Strategies to Promote Positive Change
- Pick which Strategy(s) to implement
- Define the Roles each Member of the Support Team is Going to Play: Responsibilities, Time Frame, Actions, Etc
- Identify Method to Asses if Plan is Working
- Set Up a Follow-Up Meeting to Reassess and adjust Academic and Behavior Support Plan

Sparks- Rationale for My Behavior Management Plans

It can be overwhelming to have too much information sometimes. I feel like the most effective way that I am able to use what I learn in class is to put it together in a shortened version. Classroom management is such a personal preference. There are so many ideas out there that could be wonderful but it is necessary to make sure the ideas fit your personality and philosophies. This is why I wanted to make a Behavior Management Plan for my project. I function best with lists that I can skim quickly to remind me of all of the good intentions I had. It is unrealistic to think that after this class I will mentally retain everything I read and be able to apply it. Instead, by putting together a resource document for myself I will be able to remember and apply all the things I learned by skimming back through this document. I carefully chose all the pieces for this for specific reasons. And while this is not all inclusive because behavior management must always be changing and adjusting to the specific needs of the class, these are some of the major points I want to implement into my classroom to help me run a more successful class.

Classroom Expectations and Syllabus:

Having classroom expectations and a clear syllabus function in a similar manner. Clear standards, expectations, goals, and routines help make students more successful (Jones P171: Sprick P49). By creating a syllabus and reviewing it with the class we can go over any routines that I would like to follow, goals for learning, and types of assignments and tests they can expect. This will allow them to prepare themselves for the coming class and be aware of how they should act. At the end of the syllabus they will be asked to fill out a student information sheet and sign it saying they understand the expectations. This gives me an initial commitment from the students saying they understand the expectations and consequences of my classroom (Jones P175).

Reviewing and posting the classroom expectations will simplify how to act in the classroom and provide as a visual reminder. I put together my expectations using three main points: Be respectful, be responsible, and be safe (PBS P44). This gives general guidelines and then continues to give more specific goals to achieve while still keeping them simple and clear (Jones 172). By allowing the students to help respond and develop teacher expectations, I am engaging them in the process (Jones P237).

Building Relationships:

It is important to build three main relationships to help students in being successful learners: Teacher-Student, Peer-Peer, Teacher-Parent. I think by reaching out to build all three of these relationships it will help students feel more welcome and appreciated in class and will help parents motivate their children from home (Jones P259).

By building positive teacher-student relationships, I am providing a warm, friendly atmosphere that students have been shown to be more motivated to learn in (Jones P56). I am also getting to know my students better so that I can teach to their personalities, learning styles, and interests. I can then use this information to help engage them in their learning (Jones P240). By running "get to know you activities" during the first week of class, I will be able to learn more about my students and their interests and interaction levels. I will also be able to use the "Student Information Forms" to gain insight into their home life as well as their previous academic success (Jones P68). By knowing this I can help make adjustments in homework load, individual attention, or assignment reduction to make them more successful and thus more motivated (Jones P248). To maintain this relationship I will greet students at

the door to make a positive statement and to get them ready or excited for class (Jones P 69). I will also find time to have individual conferences with students on a periodic basis to touch base with them a little more personally (Jones P69). I can also show that I am interested in them by going to other activities that they are involved in (Jones P71). I also need to maintain a high ratio of positive to negative statements to help reinforce positive behavior and recognize student's success (PBS P16). All of the methods I suggest in "Examples of positive effective comments" give options to acknowledge a variety of behavior even without affecting the flow of the class.

It is also important to build positive peer-peer relationships. This gives students a sense of comfort in the classroom if they know the students surrounding them (Jones P95). By beginning the school year with "get to know you activities" the students will also begin to get to know their classmates. This will make them more comfortable in class, to ask questions, and to feel less intimidated. By using these activities peers will feel more accepted and supported, which will affect their learning (Jones P99). By using team building activities, students will have a chance to develop skills where they can be a cohesive and supportive team (Jones P106). This will increase their ability to work together with others and feel less rejected. It will also help them develop problem solving skills, which helps with both learning and behavior (Jones P328). By incorporating team building activities not only the first week of class, but the entire length, students are continuously learning to work as a team and develop their problem solving processes.

Another important relationship that will improve the students' success is the Teacher-Parent relationship. Students' motivation to learn can come from themselves or outside sources such as their parents. A student's motivation to learn and views of school can be directly influenced by their parents (Jones P128). The more communication between parents and teachers the faster behavior or learning problems can be addressed and the more support teachers will have from the parents. By sending home a parent information form with the students the first week of school, contact is being made immediately. This allows parents to become aware of the expectations of the class and also asks for parents to send along their contact information and tidbits about their child. This increases your knowledge about the student and also makes sure that you have reliable contact information. Once the parents' contact information is stored it will be much easier to have ongoing contact with the parents. As soon as a behavior (positive or negative) arises it is important to keep parents informed (Jones P142: Sprick P57). This allows parents to help with any issues before they get out of hand. It is also important to prepare what you are going to say to a parent when you hold a conference. Meeting with parents can be flustering. The more prepared you are to explain any problems and potential solutions, the smoother the conference should go (Jones P155). The stronger the support that students have (whether teachers, peers, and parents), the more motivated and successful they will be.

Varied Instruction:

Students are more successful with varied instruction for two main reasons. The first one is that varied instruction allows you to teach to a variety of different learning styles. Not every student learns in the same way. Some learn better through movement, other verbal, others visual, etc. By teaching to a variety of learning styles you are increasing the students' success rate and therefore increasing their motivation to learn (Jones P240). This also allows you incorporate some of the students' different interests into activities. This allows them to relate more to the topic and hopefully be more intrinsically motivated to be engaged in learning (Jones P228). And by giving students some attention on "study skills," they are working on learning more effectively from different instructional methods (Jones P244).

This will help them in the long run because in the 'real world' information is not always presented in a variety of learning styles. Varying instruction also allows you to keep the students' attention span longer (Jones P198). The longer students are focusing and engaged in instruction, the more successful they will be.

Behavior Intervention:

Even with proper preparation and support established within your classroom, there are bound to be behavior issues that arise in the classroom. It is necessary to have a clear structure of consequences and expectations so that you can be firm on enforcing rules (Sprick P147). By breaking down behavior into two categories (moderate or severe), I am able to respond properly to all types of behavior (Sprick 139). Severe behavior needs more immediate and drastic attention before it causes a crisis in class.

Giving a gentle verbal reprimand, gives the students a simple reminder of the expectations (Sprick P121). If the behavior continues throughout the day or school year, it is necessary to arrange a meeting with the student (or class if the behavior is class-wide). This allows for you to hold an open discussion about their behavior and the effect it is having (Sprick P121: PBS P19). If this does not correct the behavior, I would assign them a "think sheet" and contact their parents. The "think sheet" holds them responsible for their behavior and gives them self-reflection (PBS P19). And by contacting their parents you are keeping parents updated on issues. Parents may be able to help with insight on the behavior or just act as support for the teacher (Sprick P122). When contacting a parent about behavior problems, it is helpful to have written notes of the behavior, expectations broken, and possible solutions so that you can make sure you are clear (Sprick 124). From here, it becomes necessary to meet with the student and parents to discuss the problem and come up with a behavior plan. This will help address what kind of solutions will make the student more successful: adjusted assignments, seat placement, reward system, etc. (Sprick 124). It is also necessary at this time to involve administration so they can help enforce consequences and be involved in the problem solving.

Using an Academic and Behavior Support Plan during conferences with parents, other teachers, and administration will help lead the conversation (PBS 72). In the plan, it is first important to analyze the behavior to see if there is any trend in behavior type, time, or interactions (Sprick P367). This will allow you to hypothesize the reason behind the behavior. Once the function of the reason is decided on, it will be easier to provide appropriate support for the student (Sprick P373). It doesn't make sense to put a student who is failing academically in time out because they will miss even more instruction and fall behind even more. Instead it would be appropriate to make modifications to assignments, provide one-on-one support, or assign a study buddy (Sprick P380). After behavior function is identified and a method of action is identified, it is important to make sure each member of the support team (administrators, psychologists, teachers, parents, and students) understand their role in the plan. This way everyone can follow through on their tasks so nothing slips through the cracks (PBS P76). And finally it is important to schedule a follow-up meeting to reassess the effectiveness of the plan with new collected data (Sprick P409).

The checklist and ideas I came up with are not all inclusive, but focus on the main ideas I took from this class. I believe by using this list to serve as a reminder in combination with the routines and basics I already have established I will be able to provide my students with an open, inviting atmosphere that will help make them successful learners. Even with all these preventative steps, there will still be

behavior problems and challenging students (Jones P282). Classroom management is meant to be adjusted based on the needs of the teacher and students (Sprick 110). What might work for one teacher or one class, might not work for another. But by having a strong basis of ideas and an understanding of student's motivational need, I can hopefully develop an effective classroom management plan for all my classes.