

Components of Establishing a Classroom-Behavior Plan

(Excerpt from *The Solution Book*, Topic Booklet H)

Components of the Plan

The classroom-behavior plan has five components. The first component is providing each student in the class with positive feedback. This component is the most important one. Only by giving each student positive feedback can the teacher truly motivate each student to do his or her best.

The second component is systematically providing positive feedback to the class as a whole. This procedure demonstrates to each student the need to work cooperatively as a member of a class, in addition to working as an individual. Through this component, the teacher helps students learn to cooperate, work as a team, support one another, and engage in positive peer interactions.

The third component establishes a group contingency plan whereby the entire class owes time for certain types of misbehavior. This part of the plan corrects the class as a whole to reaffirm to students the necessity of working together and cooperating with one another. It also helps students learn the borderline between acceptable and unacceptable classroom behavior.

The fourth component establishes the owing-time strategy for individual students who have misbehaved. This element of the plan is designed to teach students that there are consequences for violating rules. Students will learn that they may misbehave if they choose; however, they must also face the consequences if they do.

The fifth component is a simplified version of the classroom-behavior plan, which can be left for a substitute teacher. This component includes an explanation of the plan's approach and instructions on how to implement the plan in your absence. The information can simply be left in a place where the substitute will readily find it.

Which classrooms need the classroom-behavior plan?

All classrooms need a systematic plan for providing students with feedback on their performance. However, many classrooms already have such a plan. If you've already found a classroom-behavior plan that works, don't worry about implementing the following plan. You know that your plan is working if students are highly motivated, there are relatively few behavior problems, and students are working well together. Your plan should also be easy to implement so that your day is made easier. If, indeed, your plan meets these criteria, you may disregard the following information pertaining to a

classroom-behavior plan. Simply use the solution sheets to help you work out the behavior problems that may exist in your classroom, and write up some directions on your plan for the substitute teacher.

If, however, your classroom environment needs to be improved, if student motivation needs to be bolstered, or if a large number of behavior problems exist, implement the following plan. It is provided as a model. It may be used to help you establish a classroom environment that is positive, motivating, and pleasant. The plan is designed to provide the teacher with a structure that can be modified as needed or desired.

Will the plan require lots of time and record keeping?

No! Once the plan is established, extra work or preparation will not be necessary. The needed record keeping can be done while you are working with the students. Once the plan has been in effect for a couple of weeks, record management will require little energy and no extra work.

Initially, the classroom-behavior plan will require that the teacher remember to consistently implement the components of the plan. When things get busy, it's tempting to leave out parts of the plan. During the first two weeks, make a commitment to follow through on all components. The first couple of weeks may seem like they require extra work, but once the plan is established, it will seem to run by itself.

Record keeping can be handled through the use of three easy-to-use systems: a daily record sheet that records the students' individual points and misbehavior, and the teacher's comments; a wall chart that keeps track of individually accumulated points; and finally, a bulletin board that gives students feedback on their behavior as a class over designated time periods.

The Daily Record Sheet is designed so that it can be attached to a clipboard and kept with you at all times. (A variation of the record sheet can be used, and teachers should feel free to make variations as they are needed.) The record sheet will allow you to make notes about the performance of individual students without having to constantly interrupt what you are doing.

There is a tendency to think *I don't need to have the record sheet with me. I can remember who gets points or who owes time.* With the thousands of things a teacher must remember during the day, it's impossible to always remember everything that should be recorded. To have thorough records, record things immediately. Keep the clipboard with

you whenever you are working directly with students. This may be difficult to remember at first. You may need to use the clipboard and find you left it on the other side of the room. Take the time to get it. Don't try to remember the information until later. Taking the time to retrieve the clipboard will help you remember to keep the clipboard in your possession. Within two weeks, carrying and using the Daily Record Sheet will become automatic.

In the Materials section of this notebook is a copy of the Daily Record Sheet. Reproduce it and put the original back in the notebook for later use. Type or write the names of each student, alphabetically, on the form. Then make approximately 40 copies of the form. This will be enough for about two months of teaching. In two months, a number of students may have moved away and new students may have been added to your classroom. In this case, you may need to prepare a new form.

Begin each day by placing a copy of the Daily Record Sheet on the clipboard. Put any special reminders at the top of the sheet. Here are a few examples:

Tom—send him home for dental appointment at 11:00.

Have students return books to library.

Discuss playground problems with students.

The comments section of the record sheet should be used to make notes about particular students. See the sample Daily Record Sheet that follows. The comments section notes absences, tardiness, behavior problems, and even academic problems that the teacher wants to give some thought to.

Filled-in record sheets should be kept and periodically reviewed by the teacher. The teacher can then refer to an earlier month and determine whether the problems noted have been resolved. If a problem still exists, it's obvious that alternative solutions to the problem must be tried.