

DQ7: Recognizing Adherence and Lack of Adherence to Rules and Procedures

Element 34

Strategies for Applying Consequences for Lack of Adherence to Rules and Procedures

Verbal Cues

- Say the student's name
- Remind student of the rule or procedure
- Quietly state expected behavior
- Ask the student to stop the current behavior
- Provide constructive guidance back to the appropriate behavior

Nonverbal Cues

- Use eye contact
- Move toward the misbehaving student(s)
- Use gestures
 - Shake head "no"
 - Put a finger to your lips
 - Tap the student's desk
 - Signal a thumbs down
 - Facial expressions

Pregnant Pause

The teacher can stop teaching in response to recurring disruptive behavior. This will create an uncomfortable silence that will direct the attention in the room toward the misbehaving student(s). This can be a powerful motivator for a student to adjust his or her behavior. However, if the student's goal in misbehaving was to attract attention, this strategy can backfire.

Time-Out

Students can be placed in a designated spot that removes them from classroom activities until they are ready to rejoin with appropriate behavior. A teacher must ensure that the student is supervised at all times and the student should develop a concrete plan for how behavior will change before returning to the classroom. Students can be moved to a separate area of the classroom, a neighboring teacher's classroom, the school office, or any area where adult supervision is available. After school detention and Saturday School are also forms of time-out.

Overcorrection

- Having student complete activities that overcompensate for the inappropriate behavior
- Requires students to return damage to its original state and overcompensate by improving upon the previous condition (i.e., student draws on desk and must clean all desks or throws trash in the lunchroom and must clean entire lunchroom)
- Can also be used when a student interrupts the learning process (i.e., must summarize the content of the information and provide a copy to every student)

Interdependent Group Contingency

This strategy entails giving positive consequences to the entire group only if every student in the group meets the behavioral criteria. This can reinforce positive group behavior and extinguish negative group behaviors. Several examples are outlined below.

- *Marble Jar:* The teacher adds a marble to a jar for good class behavior and removes a marble for inappropriate class behavior. The class earns a tangible reward or privilege when the jar is full.
- *Tally Marks:* A tally mark is made on the board when the class is behaving appropriately or the tally mark can be given to a team if the students are seated in teams. When the class or team reaches the agreed upon number of tallies or if the team has the most tallies at the end of the week, they earn a reward or privilege.
- *Count Down:* The teacher identifies a certain number of “slips” or “mistakes” that are considered acceptable during a given time period (i.e., class period, day or week). A mark is made on the board every time a student fails to follow the target behavior. If fewer marks are tallied than the prearranged number, the class retains a privilege or earns a reward.
- *Group Grades:* The teacher and students agree that every student in the group will be assigned the group’s grade as their individual grade. When using this strategy, the teacher should ensure that each member of the group is contributing equally to the final outcome or product.

Home Contingency

When students do not respond with improved behavior to strategies used by a teacher in the classroom, it may become necessary to involve the home. While this can be a powerful and necessary tool, teachers should be sure to balance its use with involving the home when positive behavior occurs. Home contingency plans should begin with a meeting between the teacher, parent or guardian and the student. Specific behaviors are targeted for change and a plan for both positive and negative home consequences is discussed. It is helpful to involve the student as much as possible in the design of the behavioral plan. A system for monitoring the classroom behavior and for communicating results to parents on a daily or weekly basis is then implemented. The agreed upon consequences, both positive and negative are applied at home based on the student’s performance at school related to the identified behaviors.

Planning for High-Intensity Situations

Occasionally, a student's behavior may become out of control and there is cause for concern for the safety of other students and/or the teacher. Ideally, an administrator or other adult staff member should be available to assist in these situations, yet teachers do need to be prepared with a plan of action when help is not immediately available. Utilizing the following strategies can help to diffuse the situation until assistance arrives.

1. Recognize that the student is out of control and reasoning with him/her will provide little relief.
2. Step back to establish physical space. This signals that you do not intend any harm to the student.
3. Calm yourself by breathing deeply and organizing your thoughts.
4. Use active listening by repeating what the student is saying and how he/she is feeling. This reflects back to the student how you perceive the behavior and that you are trying to understand. Continue until the student calms down.
5. Once the student is calm, repeat a simple verbal request (i.e., I want you to go into the hallway with me to discuss this further.) Repeat the same phrase until the student complies.

Overall Disciplinary Plan

Now that you have some specific strategies for addressing lack of adherence to rules and procedures, putting the strategies together in a comprehensive plan that will work for you is the next step. Thinking about and planning for how you will handle lack of adherence to rules and procedures is crucial to feeling in control of what happens in your classroom. In addition, students feel safer in a classroom where misbehavior is handled calmly and consistently. Many schools have a school-wide plan for discipline with a graduated level of consequences. Be sure to incorporate that plan into your classroom system. Below are some things to consider as you develop your plan.

- Developing relationships with students
- Exhibiting "withitness"
- Articulating positive and negative consequences for behavior
- Involving the home
- Dealing with high-intensity situations