

LEA: Colleague to Colleague

Issue # 1 △ Communication to and for Our Newer Members

One of our greatest desires at the Lincoln Education Association is that our members be a success at their job. In so doing, you not only will be serving the students entrusted to you in fine fashion, but you bring pride to our profession. With that in mind we'd like to occasionally send you relevant, hopefully helpful information electronically so that you can read and file the material at your leisure.

Please let us know if this helps to fit your needs and if there are specific topics about teaching or the Association that would be of help to you and others. Send your suggestions for information to either Arlene Rea, LEA President at arlene.rea@nsea.org or LEA UniServ Director Dan Studer at dan.studer@nsea.org



Now that you have met your students and you are hard at work to meet their needs, today's topic is one that is always cited as being of interest to new teachers... and to many veteran teachers, too: classroom management. There's no telling when the "honeymoon" will be over and you may need to dip into your bag of tricks to keep your classroom flowing the way you would like it to.

Management Tips for New Teachers

"Bringing Order to the Classroom"

By Karen Zauber, writer/editor, National Education Association

If you're a beginning teacher, you probably worry about classroom management. You're not alone.

Classroom management—managing both student behavior and the physical learning environment—is an ongoing concern of all teachers. And a topic you'll continue to read and learn about.

Begin by considering the following **four** areas of classroom management:

1. Establishing classroom climate—the look and feel of your room
2. Conducting class efficiently—managing time and students
3. Reaching all students—delivery, encouragement, teaching techniques
4. Establishing discipline—creating an atmosphere of consistency and mutual respect

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Establishing Classroom Climate

To create the climate you want for your classroom, you must first decide the look and feel of the room. Think about the types of activities that will go on in your classroom as you answer the following questions:

- Can you tolerate noise? Must the room always be quiet? Or can you put up with a mix of noise and quiet, depending on the learning activity? It's easier to start out more controlled and gradually open up to activity and noise than the other way around.
- Must your classroom be neat (orderly rows, clean boards, limited clutter) or can you stand it messy?
- What do you want your desk and surroundings to say about you? I'm neat and efficient. I don't worry about clutter, but I like some order. I like flowers and color. I value students' work and enjoy displaying it.
- How do you want students to turn in their work? Do you want them to put it into your hands, into baskets, or e-mail it to you? Let them know.



Tell students how you feel about classroom climate and how everyone can help maintain a pleasant, productive learning environment.

Conducting Class Efficiently

When you streamline classroom procedures, you make things clearer for everyone and you make more time for teaching and learning. An efficiently run classroom enables students to focus on their work, which, in turn, helps reduce discipline problems.

To streamline your classroom procedures, use the following approaches:

- Set long-term goals and keep them in mind as you do your daily planning.
- Quickly learn and use student names.

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- Gain students' attention before beginning a new activity. Don't try to talk over student noise.
- Give students their next assignment *before* you collect or return papers.
- Don't interrupt students while they are on task.
- Edit any materials you write for students. On tests be sure to avoid using poorly worded, ambiguous questions.
- Don't introduce too many topics simultaneously. Think through the delivery of content before you get to the classroom.
- Think through directions you will give students (write them down, if that helps, before giving them verbally). Directions should be brief, and as the word implies, *direct*.
- Don't stretch out the time for an activity.
- Be consistent in what you say and what you do.

Reaching All Students

Three strategies will help you teach and reach all students. Vary your delivery to keep students awake and interested in learning. Encourage all students to do their best and let them know that you believe they can succeed. Apply proven teaching techniques to keep student interest and monitor whether they are learning.

Vary Your Delivery

- Modulate your voice. Avoid speaking too fast or in a high-pitched tone.
- Use a voice level that can be heard easily in the back of the room.
- Be animated in your delivery. Using facial expressions and body language can be very effective in teaching.
- Move around. Don't stand or sit too long in one place.

Encourage All Students

- Accentuate the positive.
- Be serious about getting work accomplished, but add some humor and fun to class each day.

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- Let students know that you expect them to succeed.
- Talk to and interact with as many students as possible, not just your favorite students.

Apply Proven Teaching Techniques

- Vary your teaching strategies or combination of strategies during the week.
- Use three or more seconds of "wait-time" after asking a content question.
- Balance the time you spend with one student or group and monitoring the entire class.
- Do appropriate comprehension checks—as you are teaching—to see if students understand the content.
- Praise students appropriately. If you praise them all the time—especially when they're only doing what's expected and no more, they won't strive to do more. Remember, intermittent reinforcement is the most powerful way to reinforce positive behavior. Be selective in your praise. Be honest. Tell them when they've excelled and how they can improve.
- Read student papers for correct answers *and* for process and student thinking.

Establishing Discipline

When you establish an atmosphere of consistency and mutual respect, you will eliminate some discipline problems and facilitate the solving of others. Here are some techniques to use:

- Be consistent in what you say and what you do.
- Quickly learn and use student names.
- Find an effective means of quieting students. Instead of saying "Shhh," consider using a subtle strategy such as dimming the lights, playing classical or other soothing music, or putting on the board a problem, a brainteaser, or an intriguing question relating to the lesson of the day.
- Avoid using threats to control the class. If you do use a threat, be prepared to carry it out.
- Nip behavior problems in the bud. Intervene quickly when students are behaving inappropriately.

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- Whenever possible, reprimand a student one-on-one instead of across the room, in front of the whole class.
- Don't permit students to be inattentive to an educationally useful media presentation.
- Use appropriate punishment for classroom misbehavior.

