

Classroom Behavior

To create and maintain consistent expectations amongst classrooms, learning spaces and play areas, Cabot Elementary School uses a clip chart system. In each classroom there is a chart with blocks, each representing a different level. Each student in that class will have a clip with their name on it. Each day, the class starts on “ready to learn”. Then, during the course of the day, students move their clothespins up or down the chart, based on the behavioral choices they make. They may be asked to move up the clip chart to “good choices”, “great job” and “super student” by making good choices - following classroom rules, being kind, respectful, responsible and engaged. However, they may also move down the clip chart by choosing behaviors that do not follow school or classroom rules, by being disrespectful or making choices that are not safe. The first clip down is “think about it”, where students are asked to think about their behavior, and serves as a warning. If they are able to turn their behavior around, they will have the opportunity to clip back up the chart. If they clip down again, the teacher will decide on a consequence based on the behavior, and if they clip all the way down to “parent contact” the student and teacher will make contact with parents or guardians either in person, on the phone or by email.

This system of management allows for students to have a visual reminder of how their behavior throughout the day, and allows teachers to better monitor and understand patterns of student behavior. The vertical nature of the clip chart also allows for constant movement - there is always a chance to turn a bad day around and clip up, even for student who have clipped all the way down the chart. In each classroom, the clip chart will also be used as the primary method of awarding positive reinforcement.

Reinforcement

The purpose of any system of reinforcement is to increase the positive, pro-social behaviors that our students are able to express and display.

Our goal should always be that our students are internally, or intrinsically, motivated to be engaged in their school work, treat others with kindness and respect, and be responsible for their own actions. **As the adults in a school community, it is our job to create a school culture in which these traits - respect, responsibility, kindness, and respect - are not only lauded by adults, but also by our student’s peers.** When the social norm and the expectation of your peers is that you will demonstrate those characteristics, the very act of demonstrating them becomes reinforcing. However, to make that shift in culture, research tells us that there must be some kind of extrinsic, or external reinforcer to help students build the skills they need to exhibit those characteristics.

Rewards or reinforcers are effective when used:

- To build new skills or sustain desired skills, with
- contingent delivery of rewards for specific behavior, and
- gradually faded over time.

-Akin-Little, Eckert, Lovett, Little, 2004

For our system of reinforcers to be effective, we must use them to build the positive school culture we are expecting, present those rewards to students when they demonstrate those specific behaviors, and fade the rewards out gradually as our students gain and are able to demonstrate those skills.

Reinforcers for students can often be simple, but meaningful actions by adults: verbal in-the-moment praise, a positive phone call home, a quick discussion after class or during a lull in activity. They can also sometimes be desired activities, items, or blocks of time that can be provided during the school day. Our goal in using a system of reinforcers for our students is always to build the positive school community and culture that we hope to see. In that vein, we will be shifting our reinforcers away from items or food, and towards things that foster community engagement and involvement. These might include earning things like:

- having lunch with a group of friends with the teacher in the classroom
- being able to select a song or group of songs for the class to listen to during independent work
- being able to visit or aide in another classroom
- a positive phone call or note home about a particular day or accomplishment
- inviting an adult to do a read aloud to the class
- selecting a seat buddy to work with during independent work
- delivering a school-wide announcement
- choosing the next read aloud book for the class

By shifting our focus from simple items to activities that engage our students in their learning community, we demonstrate that our priorities lie in supporting our students to become engaged learners and citizens of a community, and not in trading their good behavior for goods we have to offer.

Reflect Refocus Restore

When we encounter students violating a school or community expectation, our work should always be on teaching our students to examine their own behavior, to understand the harm they have done and the responsibilities that accompany those actions, and to repair whatever materials or relationships they have damaged. These notions are encompassed in the ideologies of Restorative Justice practices, and include the basic foundational beliefs that the central focus of any instance of antisocial behavior should be the needs of those affected, and that it is the responsibility of the offender to repair the harm they have done.

Within this process, there are 5 questions that we must answer:

- 1) Who has been hurt?
- 2) What are their needs?
- 3) Whose obligations are these?
- 4) Who has a stake in this situation?
- 5) What is the appropriate process to involve stakeholders in an effort to put things right?

After a serious behavioral incident, or a situation in which other more subtle or less-intensive interventions have been unsuccessful, students may be directed to fill out a Reflect, Refocus, and Restore worksheet. This sheet will walk both the student and the staff involved through the process of reflecting on the incident (What happened? Who was involved? How did my actions affect others?), refocusing their attention and behaviors (What do I need to do in the future? How will I repair the harm that I have done to others or my environment?) and restoring their relationships or parts of their environment that they have harmed.

Teachers and administrators will work with the student to decide what type of restitution needs to be done, and when it will be accomplished. Types of restitution and service that might be involved include:

Cleaning coat room
Sharpening pencils
Cleaning desks and chairs
Recycling bins emptied
Trash bins emptied
Shelving books
Washing things for preschool
Washing classroom items
Wipe down blocks in Kindergarten
Teaching a lesson to the class about _____
Making a heartfelt apology
Groundskeeping
Other: _____

Behavior Response Guidelines

Level I Behaviors

Primary Responsibility: Classroom Teacher

- Minor disruption
- Excessive talking
- Interrupting (not intended to be disrespectful)
- Unwanted physical contact (non-aggressive) with another student
- Unauthorized or misuse of school materials or equipment
- Irresponsible roughness in play

For all level one incidents, the following should occur:

- The student is provided an opportunity to tell his/her version of the incident.
- The teacher or designated staff counsels the student.
- One or more interventions and/or responses are initiated as appropriate (see below)
- All incidents and interventions are documented in the Behavioral Incidents Google doc

Possible Teacher Responses

- Planned ignoring (choosing not to acknowledge attention-seeking negative behaviors)
- Modification or change in task
- Supportive redirection
- Acknowledge student feelings
- Develop a short-term goal

- Use “I” statements

Possible positive and negative consequences

- Verbal reminders, redirection or warning
- Identify behavior and ask student to clip down
- Positive reinforcement for task completion and cooperation
- In class time-out or break
- Work completion during free time
- Restitution (verbal or written apology, cleaning up messes made)
- Loss of privileges
- Use of a buddy teacher
- Parent notification or involvement

Level II behaviors

Primary Responsibility: Classroom teacher or Student Support Team

- Repeated or continuing Level I behaviors, after previous interventions have been unsuccessful
- Purposefully not following directions
- Vulgarity or obscenity
- Disrespectful language or actions
- Fighting
- Purposeful classroom disruptions
- Minor damage or defacement of school property
- Throwing objects that could hurt others or damage property (snowballs, pencils, rocks, rubber bands, etc.)
- Leaving the assigned area without permission of an adult
- Disruptive behavior with a substitute

For all level two incidents, the following should occur:

- The student is provided an opportunity to tell his/her version of the incident.
- The teacher or designated staff notifies the student's parent/guardian.
- The teacher or designated staff counsels the student.
- One or more interventions and/or responses are initiated as appropriate (see below)
- All incidents and interventions are documented in the Behavioral Incidents Google doc

Possible teacher or staff responses

- Direct student to pre-arranged location (buddy teacher classroom, office, other)
- Acknowledge student feelings
- Develop a short-term goal
- Short-term behavior chart or plan
- Referral to SST

Possible positive and negative consequences

- Identify behavior and ask student to clip down
- In class time-out or break
- Work completion during free time
- Restitution (verbal or written apology, cleaning up messes made)
- Loss of privileges
- Use of a buddy teacher
- Plan for scheduled parental notification and involvement
- RRR worksheet and restitution completion

Level III behaviors

Primary Responsibility: Student Support Team and Administrator

- Continuing or repeated Level II behaviors
- Chronic violation of school or classroom rules
- Serious verbal aggressions or bullying
- Theft
- Complete refusal to obey a reasonable request by an adult after a period of time
- False activation of a fire alarm
- Inability of the student to regain self-control

For all level three incidents, the following should occur:

- The student is referred to the administrator or designated staff member
- The student is provided an opportunity to tell his/her version of the incident.
- The designated staff notifies the student's parent/guardian.
- All incidents and interventions are documented in the Behavioral Incidents Google doc

Possible staff and administrator responses

- If immediate response is necessary, the crisis plan will be initiated to keep all students and staff safe.
- Referral to SST.
- Creation of individual Positive Behavior Support plan.

Possible positive and negative consequences

- Completion of RRR worksheet and restitution with designated staff member.
- Home/school coordination and support via regularly scheduled meetings
- Interagency referral and planning
- Short-term suspension
- Long-term suspension

Level IV behaviors

Primary Responsibility: Student Support Team and Administrator

- Bullying, hazing, harassment or threat
- Drug or alcohol possession or use
- Serious damage or defacement of property
- Assault
- Weapons possession, threat to use, or actual use

For all level four incidents, the following should occur:

- The student is referred to the appropriate administrator or designated staff member
- The student is provided an opportunity to tell his/her version of the incident.
- The designated staff notifies the student's parent/guardian.
- All incidents and interventions are documented in the Behavioral Incidents Google doc

Possible staff and administrator responses

- If immediate response is necessary, the crisis plan will be initiated to keep all students and staff safe.
- Referral to SST.
- Creation of individual Positive Behavior Support plan.

Possible positive and negative consequences

- Completion of RRR worksheet and restitution with designated staff member.
- Home/school coordination and support via regularly scheduled meetings
- Interagency referral and planning
- Short-term suspension
- Long-term suspension
- Consideration for placement in an alternative program
- Recommendation for expulsion when prescribed by state and/or local policy