

## Classroom Management Plan

Creating an atmosphere conducive to learning is of utmost importance in a classroom where students are expected to thrive academically. It's my belief that the learning atmosphere the teacher is able to maintain can be the difference between a teacher being able to successfully foster enthusiastic learning within her classroom, or a teacher frustrated by the wonderful ideas she has for implementation, but without the tools for successful implementation. Providing the students with clear expectations, motivational instruction, and behavioral consequences all play significant roles in successful management.

### Physical Environment

My classroom is organized into modular pods, with pairs of students all working on different strands of technology simultaneously. I'm lucky in that I arrived in this position at a 3-year old school with a brand new office-type modular setting already in place. The pods are separated by partition walls in-between working pairs of students, aiding in the isolation of activity from other activity. Nonetheless, I found that students could easily find themselves distracted, finding interest in sending the occasional "surprise missiles" from one partition to another. The partitions that were intended to provide separation conducive to a variety of activities occurring separately yet simultaneously from one another, also provided a barrier from easy detection by me trying to monitor classroom activity. Keeping students on task and tending to their own work was a learning process for me that first year in 2000.



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### Behavior Management

A key aspect to my behavior management is the specific outline of behavioral expectations and consequences shared with the students the first two days of school. I open the class with a [general outline](#) of class rules, content, and grading. I share an introduction of myself, and I ask for the students to share some things of themselves. I consider it a "getting to know each other" session.



The second day of class is dedicated to more specific behavior expectations and a clear list of consequences to unacceptable or off-task behaviors. On this day, the students complete [a worksheet I call their contract](#), and I explain that I keep the contract on file in the event they claim to not have been aware of expected behaviors.

In essence, my behavior management program is a combination of positive and negative reinforcement. Students are given 10 days at a module, and they work independently at its completion. Diligent students can usually finish the module within 6 to 8 days, while others might need the full 10 days. When students complete a unit, they have me average their scores to receive a final grade. Students with an average grade of 80% or above are given the option of

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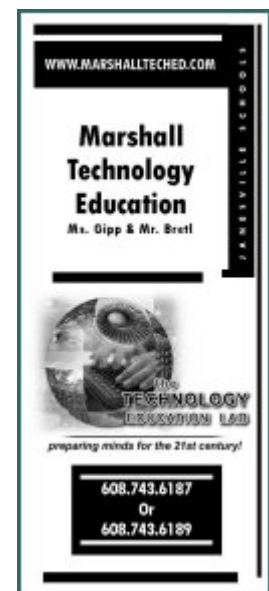
playing (educational) games from the time they finish until the 10-day rotation is complete. This creates a desire to stay on task to complete the assigned work in good time, while also necessitating the need to do it well, if the reward is to be earned. In the event a student finishes before the end of the allotted 10 days, but does not earn at least an 80%, extra credit is offered, usually in the form of an extension activity related to the technology they are currently studying.

### Parent Communication

As a parent of four children, I find that communication between the teacher and home can be the most valued resource in keeping a student on the right track. I have experienced first-hand the surprise of a child performing below her level of expected achievement in a subject area without any sort of communication from the teacher until it was too late to make a difference for that quarter. The parent, in my opinion, is most often the teacher's greatest asset in bringing about a change in behavior when necessary. At the same time, when a child is deserving of praise for achievement, the home setting is where the greatest reward can be achieved through recognition. I believe very much in open and frequent communication between school and home, especially when it involves the student who benefits from continual guidance in these very important formative years of developing independence.

I've been known at times to bring a student directly to the classroom phone with me in the middle of class in order for them to explain to their parents an unacceptable behavior that just occurred in the classroom. I inform my students in the beginning of the year that they will find me to be a teacher that is perhaps a bit quick to phone home, because I believe that their parents are the most influential people involved in their successes, and my job is to help them to perform to the best of their abilities. Unfortunately, it seems that many of my colleagues don't seem to understand and take advantage of this wonderful and effective tool of management.

The most common question I receive from parents is, "What exactly is Tech Ed?" It sort of makes me laugh... I've heard it so many times. I send home a class outline (similar to a syllabus) at the year's onset. It provides information on classroom procedure, grading, expectations, and safety rules. It also explicitly explains some of my disciplinary procedures and consequences in the event it becomes necessary to remove a student from the hands-on environment to do book work for the rest of a rotation.



Early in September we also have an Open House for parents. I prepared a [brochure](#) and a [parent video](#) to provide the parents with an abundance of information about the class, including the class content, structural procedures, and grading.

### Instructional Planning & Delivery

Since students are all working at their individual paces, and on different technology units, my role is generally that of a facilitator. We have a routine of students picking up their worksheets at the beginning of class, logging into the Tech Lab program and getting right to work. I have a computer management system that allows me to freeze each of the students' computers in the event I have announcement or specific instruction for the group.

When students are in need of assistance, they turn their lights on at their stations to notify me. My role during any given class period is to float around the room answering questions and offering guidance.