

Establishing and Teaching Procedures

“Alongside the need for freedom, there is an equally pressing human desire – for structure, safety, and a sense of order to the world around us. These two universal needs – for freedom on the one hand and structure on the other – are particularly relevant to teachers, who must strike the right balance between the two in order to create healthy, high-functioning learning environments.” ~ *Sam Chaltain, American Schools: The Art of Creating a Democratic Learning Community*

Procedures to Establish and Teach

“The number one problem in the classroom is not discipline; it is the lack of procedures and routines. A well managed classroom has a set of procedures and routines that structure the classroom. The procedures and routines organize the classroom so that the myriad of activities that take place there function smoothly and stress-free...In an effective classroom, the management structure provides for an environment that is conducive to learning. The students are working; they are paying attention, cooperative and respectful of each other; they exhibit self-discipline, and remain on task. All materials are ready and organized, the furniture is arranged for productive work, and a calm and positive climate prevails.” –*Harry K. Wong, “The First Days of School”*

Consider all of the things students will do in class and in school. To ensure order and productivity, let students know the procedure beforehand by explaining it, modeling, rehearsing, and reinforcing the procedure. Teaching some procedures will be simple and quick; others will take more time and require detail, but don’t make anything more complicated than it needs to be. Keep in mind that while all procedures need to be taught, **not all procedures need to be taught at very beginning of school.** Just ensure students are taught the procedure before being required to participate in it. (For example, if you head to the computer lab for the first time during the second month of school, make sure to teach them the expected procedures a few days before heading to the lab.) Most importantly, when teaching procedures, do so in a professional way, letting students know they are developing the mature qualities of serious students. If you resort to teaching procedures as a “drill sergeant,” students will feel belittled and grow resentful.

- Absent work
- Altered schedules or special events
 - early dismissal
 - late start
 - state testing days
 - inclement weather warnings (hurricane or tornado drills)
 - fire alarm/evacuation
 - attending an assembly
- Announcements (i.e. over TV or intercom)
- Assignments
 - Directions (Where will directions for assignments be posted?)
 - Filling out assignments (i.e., always include name; label papers with name, date, and subject in top left corner, etc.)
 - Due dates (Will these be posted on a calendar in the room? Should students write them in their own personal planner?)
- Audience member
- Bathroom (washing hands, flushing toilet, maintaining up-keep of facilities, etc.)
- Borrowing supplies (pencils, pens, paper, etc.)
- Class & Small Group Discussions
- Classroom movement/Traffic patterns
 - Sharpening pencils
 - Throwing away trash
 - Retrieving supplies

- Cleaning up at end of class (making sure desks and supplies are put back in order, check the area around you for trash, checking to ensure you have all books, assignments, personal items, etc.)
- Complaint, conflict, or issue with a fellow student or teacher
- Computers/Computer lab
- Dismissal
- Emergency Procedures (severe weather, fire or tornado drill, lock down, etc.)
- Entering/Exiting the Room
- Fieldtrips
- Grades
 - Progress reports and report cards (parent/guardian signature required? Stored/filed somewhere for reference, etc.)
 - Keeping track of class progress and average
- Greeting/Hand Shakes at Door
- Group Work
- Hall Behavior/Walking in Hall
- Hall Passes (restroom, office, phone)
- Homework
 - writing homework assignment down (i.e. in a planner)
 - directions posted where?
 - procedure for turning it in
 - keeping track of grades received
- How to ask for help
- Journal
- Library
- Lining up
- Listening
 - The characteristics of active listening
 - Responding to questions (taking time to think; not allowed to say “I don’t know” - rather must say “Please come back to me while I think about that.”)
- Locker policy
 - Are there specific times students can visit lockers?
 - Are students expected to keep lockers organized?
 - What if I forget my combination or lose my key?
- Lunch
 - lining up
 - getting food
 - lunch room seating; what to do if a student has no one to sit with
 - cleaning up
 - returning to class
- Notebook (will students be required to keep an organized 3-ring binder, folders, etc.?)
- Note taking
- Paper Movement (Collecting and Distributing)
- Personal emergency (feeling ill, restroom emergency, etc.)
- Projects
 - writing project assignment down (i.e. in a planner)
 - directions posted where in classroom?
 - procedure for turning it in
 - keeping track of grades received
- Schedule for day, week, etc.
 - Where will day’s agenda be posted? (i.e. in corner of board under “Now Playing”)
 - Where will week’s agenda be posted? (i.e. under heading, “Coming Soon”)
- Scheduling an appointment to talk or for assistance
- Stairway Behavior
- Storing personal items in classroom (book bag, jacket, purses, etc.)

