

HOW TO DEAL WITH CLASS MANAGEMENT*

*Discipline

Is This Important?

- * The frustration of dealing with discipline problems may be the number one reason that so many music teachers quit after only a few years of teaching.
- * Society increasingly expects schools to be responsible for discipline that was handled in the home in the past.
- * You will be confronted with discipline problems. Therefore, having a plan in advance can only help.
- * Most importantly, more class time spent stopping discipline problems = less class time for teachers to teach and students to learn music!

Teacher Attitude

- * Since, in music, we are dealing closely with feeling (affect) it requires a higher degree of pupil-teacher rapport than in other classes.
- * Students will not try to improve if they hear nothing but criticism.
- * The teacher should show a basic optimism about the students' ability level.
- * Be diplomatic when correcting-try to say something good as well.
- * Let students know that mistakes are part of being human.
- * A teacher can be firm with high expectations and still show optimism about the groups' success.

Discipline and Teaching

MISTAKEN SUPPOSITIONS

- * Teaching is positive, discipline is negative.
- * A teacher should not have to “teach” students to behave, they should know better.
- * Social skills should be taught by parents, we should not have to do it.
- * Bad behavior should just be tolerated since that is the way kids are.
- * Time is wasted when we have to deal with discipline problems.

Developing Desirable Behavior in Class

1. Most important: Have a great lesson plan and move with rapid pacing to teach it.
2. Reinforce good behavior, withhold reinforcement for bad. Reinforcers can be words, looks, granting privileges having to do with music, etc.
3. Work on correcting specific actions, not “You have a bad attitude.”
4. Be positive-praise for good things often and call on students by name.
5. Have few rules but mean what you say with consistent enforcement.
6. Involve the class in developing guidelines for behavior (expectations).
7. Do not be afraid that you will be disliked by the class for dealing with problems.
8. Appeal to students’ desire to be adults. (connect maturity and good behavior)
9. Remain calm and rational. (10 seconds silence?)
10. Ensemble directors: Know Your Music and maintain eye contact.

Handling Problems in Class

* MINOR DISTURBANCES

1. Stop talking, look at student, perhaps short reminder of rules.
2. If persistent, deal with student(s) outside of class.
3. If many students are disturbing, **10 seconds silence (no movement)**

* PERSISTENT RULE VIOLATORS

1. Private conference outside of class which gives student a chance to talk. (This avoids giving troublemaker class attention.)
2. Be honest, stress difference between liking student and liking what he/she did.

* SERIOUS PROBLEMS

1. Work with principal, counselor.
2. Be careful about just lowering grade, since often these students don't care.
3. Under certain circumstances, remove from an ensemble class since membership is a privilege.
 - a. Document all dealings with the student up to this point.

NOW

With the students at your table develop FIVE CLASS RULES for a Fifth Grade Music Class studying recorders. (Anticipate common problems.)