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Student Conference

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Declare a Purpose**

A student conference should be used to discuss a student’s performance or behavior. It can be used as a deterrent technique – when student performance has changed or there seems to be something troubling a student. A conference can also be part of a “consequence menu” - it can serve as a step in the discipline process. For example, if a student is off task or exhibiting inappropriate classroom behavior, a verbal warning can be given. If the behavior continues, the next step may be a student conference, then a buddy classroom, parent contact, and so on.

**2. Hold the Conference**

The actual conference with the student should be private and between the teacher and student only, without other classmates. The teacher should clearly explain the reason for the conference, the issue that is concerning the teacher, and how the student and teacher can work together. The conference should include a dialogue which allows the student to explain his or her point of view, while at the same time answering the teacher’s questions.

**3. Keep a Record**

It is essential to keep track of student conferences. A simple form or log can be used to acknowledge when the conference occurred, why it occurred, and what was accomplished. See the Visuals section for an example. Many teachers have students fill out a form acknowledging what happened during the conference and what both student and teacher decided to do in response to the issues discussed.

**4. Follow Up**

It is important to check in with the student after the conference, even if it is just briefly. If the student’s behavior or performance has improved since the conference, provide feedback and praise. If inappropriate behavior is still occurring, it may be necessary to go to the next step of the discipline plan or hold another conference involving a parent and/or administrator.

**When to Use**

Student conferences should be used when a private conversation with a student is necessary. They can be used as a deterrent technique during or after class, after noticing a decline in:

1. The student is performing poorly academically, and the student does not have a learning disability.
2. The teacher has noticed a drop in academic performance and wants to be proactive before their performance deteriorates further.
3. The student is exhibiting inappropriate behaviors.
4. The teacher has noticed a drop in academic performance and wants to be proactive before their performance deteriorates further.
5. Returning to the classroom after the student has been suspended or remove from the class.

**Variations**

1. **Student-Teacher-Parent Conference** - When necessary, conferences can be held with the student, teacher, and a parent or guardian of the student.
2. If there are multiple issue to cover, another conference can be scheduled.
3. The teacher could conduct conferences daily for a short time to provide faster feedback on progress or lack of it.

Student Responsibility Forms

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Create the Student Responsibility Form**

Decide what behaviors you will want to address with your form. Some teachers use forms for missed homework assignments only. Other teachers choose to use them for certain types of off-task behavior. If you choose to use the Student Responsibility Form for more than one behavior, list the possibilities on the form. Check off the behavior before you hand the form to the student. Make a place for the student to explain why he or she demonstrated the behavior and a place for the student to sign the slip, indicating they acknowledge the infraction.

**2. Set expectations**

Once students have been taught procedures and expectations, they should be taught about the Student Responsibility Form procedure. Not following the set expectations means receiving a notification, just like students would receive when they have a job. It’s important that students understand that the teacher will show forms to their parents and administration, if necessary.

**3. Decide on consequences**

Decide and explain how students will be penalized as they accumulate Student Responsibility Forms. For example, three forms for off-task behavior could result in parent contact. Receiving a form for not completing a homework assignment could mean that 5 points will be taken off the weekly participation grade.

**4. Distribute the form**

Any time a student fails to meet a classroom expectation, hand him or her a Student Responsibility Form. Allow the student time to complete the form, explaining why he or she chose not to follow the classroom expectation.

**5. File the form**

Collect and place the form in the student’s file or in a filing system of your choice.

**When to Use**

Use Student Responsibility Forms to encourage accountability for behaviors you are trying to reduce in your classroom:

1. Missing homework assignment
2. Not having necessary supplies
3. Not participating in class

4. Distracting other students

5. Disrespectful to others

**Variations**

1. **Pink Slips - or Other Color Slips** - Some teachers use colored paper for the Student Responsibility Forms and call the forms by that color. Pink is a popular color, so teachers can say they are issuing Pink Slips for behavior that is keeping students from the business of learning.
2. **Parent Signature** - You might decide to give further weight to the forms by having students take them home to be signed by a parent or guardian.
3. **Class-wide Motivation System with Student Responsibility Forms -** Depending on why you are issuing forms, you might want to have a competition between classes: the class with the fewest amount of issued forms each six weeks earns a reward. Or you could have a weekly class reward: if no Student Responsibility Forms are issued during the week, the class receives a reward.

Ticket Reward System

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Determine and teach logistics**

Determine the targeted behaviors that will allow students to earn a ticket. They can be general, but it is also good to have some specific behaviors that will earn tickets. For example, the first three students to clean up their station earn a ticket. Be sure to explain to the students how tickets can be earned. Also, determine the time interval for the drawing, i.e. every Friday, every three weeks, etc.

**2. Choose rewards**

It is helpful to get student input when determining prizes and rewards. A Prize Box can be created to collect a variety of prizes and rewards (see visual). Prizes can include inexpensive school supplies, such as pens, pencils, and erasers. Target, Walmart, CVS, and Dollar Tree all have inexpensive items to stock up the Prize Box! The teacher can also create coupons as prizes, such as “listen to music during an independent task” or “free homework assignment.”

**3. Hand out tickets**

When students demonstrate the targeted behaviors, hand out tickets. Use tickets to reinforce targeted behaviors and decrease unwanted behaviors. Tickets can also be used as a prize for winning classroom games. For example, the group who gets the most points during the test review game will earn five tickets for each group member.

**4. Collect tickets**

When students receive a ticket, they put their name on the back. They can either return it to the teacher or keep it until the classroom raffle is held. If the teacher collects the tickets, they should be stored in a safe, secure place until time for the drawing (see visual). Keep a separate storage container for individual classes.

**5. Draw winners**

When the predetermined time interval is complete, draw a ticket from the ticket jar (or whatever container was used to hold tickets). The student whose name is on the ticket wins the drawing and may pick a prize from the Prize Box. More than one ticket can be drawn in order to have multiple winners each time. Empty the storage container after the drawing to start over.

**When to Use**

1. This reward system can be used throughout the entire school year.
2. The reward system can be used for a shorter period to ensure the program is sustainable for longer periods.
3. At the beginning of the year to obtain compliance with classroom procedures.

**Variations**

1. **Ticket Economy** - Rather than collecting students’ tickets and then drawing a winner, students can use the tickets to purchase prizes and/or rewards. The teacher must set prize/reward denominations and create a menu or list of choices. Bigger or more exciting prizes/rewards can be worth more tickets.
2. **Class-wide Ticket System** - Tickets can be awarded to the entire class, rather than to individual students. The class can then choose to spend their tickets on predetermined prizes/rewards similar to the above-mentioned Ticket Economy.

Log Books

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Determine type of log book(s)**

There are many different types of log books. An Attendance Log Book can be used in order to keep track of tardies and absences, whereas a Parent Communication Log Book can be used to record contact with parents. Determine the log books that will best suit the needs of your classroom.

**2. Set up the book(s)**

Be sure that the Log Book is set up and organized for consistent use. Many teachers keep one log book with tabs for items that students record (tardies, bathroom trips, make-up work) and another log book with tabs for teacher use only.

**3. Record data**

The most important step is to record data consistently. When students are in charge of recording data (in a tardy book or make-up log, for example), be sure to teach students exactly what and when to write in the books and do periodic spot-checks to be sure information is accurate.

**When to Use**

1. Log books can be set up for the entire year when a need is identified. If the log is one that students will use, they must be taught how and when to use it.
2. Log books can be set up for shorter period when a need is identified

**Variations**

1. **Tutorials Log Book** - A log book can be used to record when students attend tutorials, including before and after school as well as lunch tutorials.
2. **Discipline Log Book** - Record discipline steps taken with each student in a log book. Items that can be recorded: re-directs in the classroom, student-teacher conferences, phone calls to parents, referrals or contact with administration.
3. **Classroom Visitor Log Book** - Keep track of visitors in the classroom, including parents, other teachers, administrators, Special Education staff, etc. Visitors sign the log book with the times they enter and leave the classroom. For elementary students, this could be an opportunity for student participation and even added as a classroom job.

Classroom Contract

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Ask students' opinions**

Allow students time to brainstorm problems that they face in class and at school.  This can be done individually, with small groups, or through a classroom survey.  For example, students may state that they suffer from bullying, classroom disruptions, or disrespectful behavior.

**2. Ask for students' ideas**

Once the problems have been outlined, the students and teacher collaborate to create solutions. As groups bring up solutions, ask a student to write them on the board or a poster.  Use positive language when possible. This gives students a clearer idea of how they should react to problems they encounter, which is more effective than only telling them how they should not behave.

**3. Summarize students' ideas**

Facilitate a class discussion to gather feedback from the students before moving on to the next step. Emphasize that it is important for the Classroom Contract to include rules that students believe in and that they will adhere to as individuals and as a group. Ensure that the list contains all behavioral objectives you deem necessary. If not, guide the students to add any behavior goals that they originally missed while brainstorming. Additionally, have students think about what could be removed from the list.

**4. Turn ideas into rules**

Create a poster or anchor chart to display the finalized rules. The rules will likely include guidelines such as: hands and feet to yourself, actively listen to the speaker, be kind, be respectful, etc.

**5. Sign the contract**

To create ultimate student ownership, allow time for each student to sign his or her name to the completed contact. The teacher should sign the contract as well. Place the contract in a prominent position in the classroom.

**6. Review the contract**

Hold intermittent Classroom Contract discussion sessions. Ask students to assess progress and determine if any contract amendments should be made.

**When to Use**

1. Use the Classroom Contract at any time during a lesson to encourage structure and desirable behavior, specifically.
2. At the beginning of the school year
3. When students are not following the agreed-upon rules
4. Before beginning a new activity or unit
5. Upon returning from a long break

**Variations**

1. **Team Social Contracts** - Small groups of students can use the same process as noted above to create a Team Social Contract.  This would work well during group activities or when assigning new table groups.
2. **Individual Social Contracts** - If the Classroom Contract is working for most students but not for specific individuals, create an individual contract for students who need one. This contract will not be shared with the entire class. It will allow the individual student to be held directly accountable for their actions and behavioral decisions.

Attention Signal

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Identify your signal**

Decide on a verbal and physical signal. One common and effective signal is to firmly say, “Give Me Five,” while raising your right hand.

**2. Students return your signal**

Each student should respond to the Attention Signal by stopping activity, looking at the teacher, and raising one hand in the air or responding in a way the teacher requests.

**3. Hold your signal**

Hold your hand in position until each student stops activity and directs attention to the speaker.

**4. Teach and practice your signal**

Make sure that students know the procedure and expectations. Keep practicing until the students become silent and provide their undivided attention every time the signal is used.

**When to Use**

1. Use the Attention Signal at any time during a lesson to encourage structure and desirable behaviors.
2. Regrouping the students to focus their attention back on a specific topic
3. Making transitions to a new activity or content area
4. Giving extra instruction during group assignments
5. Providing directions during a large, loud activity, such as a field trip or assembly

**Variations**

1. **Clapping Signal** - Use a clapping rhythm that students echo back. This may need to be modeled and practiced a number of times to ensure that students are quickly able to focus and give their attention.
2. **Countdown** - Begin at 5 and count down until arriving at 0. This gives students time to finish or stop what they are doing and focus on the speaker. At zero, all students should form a zero with one hand in the air, be silent, and have their eyes on the speaker. The countdown numbers can be changed, based on how quickly the students’ attention is needed. Intermediate teachers might also count down using fractions or decimals to reinforce and practice math standards.

Fill-In-The-Blank Reward System

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Decide on the word(s)**

Determine the word or phrase students will need to complete in order to earn the reward. To create buy-in for the reward system, use shorter words or phrases when you first implement the system, so students earn more frequent rewards. Teachers often begin with the name of the school mascot as the first Fill-in-the-Blank. Write the blanks for the word or phrase in a place that is easy to access and is always visible.

**2. Decide on reward**

After input and brainstorming from students, identify the reward for completing the set word or phrase. The content of the Fill-in-the-Blank and the reward can be directly related. For example, the phrase may be “Popcorn is the best snack!” and when filled in, the students earn a popcorn party as the reward. Other reward ideas include students being able to listen to music during group work or bring a preferred snack to eat during class. See the list at right for other suggested rewards.

**3. Earn letters or words**

As the class meets behavior expectations, they earn letters or words to fill in the blanks. The letters can be awarded at the teacher’s discretion—sometimes for one specific behavior or procedure (i.e. beginning the warm up on time) or for general positive classroom behaviors (i.e. everyone actively participated in the activity or discussion). A limit may be set by the teacher, for example, the class can earn one letter or word each day. In this case, it is beneficial to discuss why the class earned or failed to earn the letter/word for the day.

**4. Reward**

When the word or phrase is complete, students receive the pre-determined reward.

**When to Use**

1. Use the Fill-in-the-Blank Reward System at any time throughout the school year. When first introducing this tool, smaller words or phrases may be used along with more frequent rewards in order to gain student interest.
2. This tool may also be used leading up to a specific classroom activity (see Content/Activity Specific variation below).

**Variations**

1. **Content/Activity Specific** - The word or phrase can be directly related to the content area or a specific activity for the class. For example, students may have the opportunity in science class to participate in the creation of a classroom garden. The privilege may be earned by completing the Fill-in-the-Blank phrase, “Grow a Garden.”
2. **Earn 'Em, Lose 'Em** - Just as in the procedures listed above, the class can earn letters or words for positive behaviors that meet classroom expectations. An added element can be the risk of losing letters as well. If an expectation is not met (i.e. the entire class does not begin warm up on time), the teacher can remove a letter/word from the word or phrase that was previously earned.

Affirmations

<http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/student-conference/student-conference-45023-note>

**How to Use**

**1. Choose**

Choose an affirmation or set of affirmations that you will use with your class (see templates for examples).

**2. Teach**

Teach your students what the affirmation(s) look like and sound like and how to do them appropriately.

**3. Establish Guidelines**

 Set up guidelines for when and how affirmations can be earned and post these in the classroom.

**4. Target Behaviors**

Target the desired behavior(s) that will earn an affirmation.

**5. Acknowledge Behaviors**

Publicly acknowledge a student or group of students who have exhibited the desired behavior. Say out loud exactly what they did.

**6. Give Choices**

Allow the acknowledged students to choose which affirmation they want to receive.

**7. Give Affirmation**

Lead the class in giving the affirmation.

**When to Use**

1. When targeting a desired behavior, affirmations should be given more often at first to increase likelihood that behavior will be repeated.
2. increase a desired behavior.
3. acknowledge a desired behavior.
4. create an atmosphere of rapport and respect within your classroom.

**Variations**

1. **Written Affirmations** - Place an affirmation board In a prominent place in your classroom. Post written affirmations for students and parents to view the positivity and encouragement happening in your class. Students or teachers may add positive notes to your affirmation board.
2. **Positive Notes Home** - Send home a positive note on a card or paper with a special logo, like “Good News from School.”
3. **Phone Call** - Make a fake phone call to a famous person telling him or her about a positive behavior that occurred in your classroom (see templates for examples).