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Behavior Management Manual for Asa Mercer Middle School

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ABSTRACT

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT MANUAL FOR ASA MERCER MIDDLE SCHOOL

By

John L. Paloy

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This project examined the creation and implementation of a behavior management manual for Asa Mercer Middle School, in the Seattle School District. The review of current research indicated that school behavior codes and manuals were more successful when they were open for revision and discussion, concise and relevant, used consistently amongst all staff as an educational tool, and containing systems for students to redeem themselves and be rewarded. Included are a concise behavior management manual for students, along with a staff edition with more annotated descriptions and implementation methods. The overall purpose of the manual was to create an educational tool to assist in teaching and managing behavior, in order to establish a positive and successful learning environment.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE.....	1
BACKGROUND OF PROJECT.....	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	4
PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT.....	4
LIMITATIONS OF THE PROJECT.....	4
RESEARCH.....	5
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	5
CHAPTER TWO.....	6
INTRODUCTION.....	6
THE NEED FOR A BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT MANUAL.....	6
COMPONENTS OF A BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT MANUAL.....	10
OPEN FOR DISCUSSION AND DEBATE.....	11
CLEAR, CONCISE AND RELEVANT.....	12
MANUAL AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL.....	13
PROVIDING CONSISTENCY.....	14
REWARDS AND REDEMPTION.....	15
SUMMARY.....	16
CHAPTER THREE.....	17
PROCEDURES.....	17
NEED FOR THE PROJECT.....	17
PROCEDURES FOR THE PROJECT.....	18
PLANNED IMPEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT.....	19

CHAPTER FOUR.....	20
THE PROJECT.....	20
CHAPTER FIVE.....	21
SUMMARY.....	21
CONCLUSIONS.....	21
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	23
REFERENCES.....	25
APPENDIX.....	30
ASA MERCER STAFF SURVEY REGARDING BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE.....	30

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

“Rules are frequently communicated to students in a manner that would be unacceptable if applied to other subjects. Imagine a social studies teacher who taught the Constitution by simply giving a copy to students, asking them and their parents to sign a form acknowledging that they had read the document, and then testing the students on their constitutional knowledge and understanding!” (Schimmel, 1997, p.70)

Schimmel (1997) believed that school rules need to be taught and made part of the curriculum. In addition, George, Harrower and Knoster(2003) emphasized that primary prevention of behavioral problems comes from the teaching of positive, pro-social behavior. Skiba and Peterson(2000) argued that children need to be socialized and taught how to interact, (which is the root of how instruction and correction are to be provided.) Furthermore, Horner, Sugai and Horner (2000), stated that schools need to define as well as teach expected student behaviors, and to not assume that students will already have learned appropriate social skills. As Nelson, Martella and Martella (2002) discussed, it is important to view student misbehaviors as instructional opportunities. Further, Smith and Sandhu (2004) declared that pro-social behaviors must be taught at the school level in order to establish a positive school climate, as well as serving to connect students to school. Saunter (2001) believed that effective discipline would seek out opportunities to teach and correct a child.

Besides teaching appropriate behaviors, Smith and Sandhu (2004) also thought that many discipline policies are reactive and punitive, focusing on the problem and not on building up the student. Schimmel (1997), similarly argued that punitive discipline, handled in a restrictive and dictatorial manner, accompanied by rules that were vague or purposeless, lead students to rebellion. Furthermore, Skiba and Peterson (2000) declared that the current trend of harsh, zero tolerance discipline policies have not been proven to prevent violence or improve school climate. Safran and Oswald (2003) argued that research had shown that the increase in get tough and zero tolerance policies may actually increase the number of disciplinary issues that they are attempting to reduce. Horner, Sugai, and Horner (2000) believed that get tough discipline policies that do not balance in teaching appropriate behaviors are ineffective. Finally, Di Lullo (2004) affirmed that vague, irrelevant or outdated rules and policies are also difficult for school staffs to enforce.

According to Horner, Sugai, and Horner (2000), the primary benefit of having a school-wide approach to behavior and discipline that was taught and proactive was that it had statistically been shown to reduce discipline referrals. Safran and Oswald (2003) found similarly, that schools that used a school-wide program or policy for behavior management had shown a reduction in office referrals over control group schools that did not. Shellady and Sealander (2003) elaborated on this as well, finding that the long term effects of a proactive school-wide behavior management program would likely be sustained beyond school, and into the community.

Smith and Sandhu (2004) reported that many schools have instituted school-wide behavioral programs in efforts to combat bullying and school violence, while Skiba and Peterson (2000) found that many different comprehensive behavioral programs exist that are effective in reducing school violence. Shellady and Sealander (2003) discussed the connections between strong school-wide behavioral guidelines and the early detection of violent or anti-social student behavior. Painter (1999), described the Washington Education Association's involvement in creating safe schools, and found that bullying was a fundamental issue in discipline and safety that must be dealt with by a school by school basis. Orpinas, et al (1996) found that having school-wide norms that address the issues of bullying and violence can help promote peace. In addition, Walker, Ramsey and Gresham contended that "A school-wide behavior code creates a positive school climate by clearly communicating and enforcing a set of behavioral standards." (p. 15). Finally, McEvoy (1999) concluded that public demand for schools to address behavior, discipline and safety is a growing phenomenon.

Clearly defined and uniform behavioral expectations are important in order to avoid inconsistent expectations, according to Scott (2003). Scott believed: "The risk is that inconsistencies across adults will create unpredictable environments, setting the occasion for failure as students continually test the limits." (p.3). Skiba and Peterson (2000) argued that inconsistencies in behavioral expectations gives students conflicting messages. Shanker (1995) discussed how clear codes of conduct and consequences help to avoid confusion and aid in creating a proper learning environment. Shanker then argued that this will cut down on unfairness and perceived biases, by having all expectations and disciplinary consequences spelled out clearly in advance. Finally,

Schimmel (1997) discussed how inconsistencies can lead to misinformed teachers, who then fail to take appropriate disciplinary actions.

Statement of the Problem

Can a school-wide behavior management manual with clearly defined expectations and disciplinary consequences reduce disciplinary problems at Asa Mercer middle school? Will efforts to teach the appropriate behaviors mentioned in the manual enable students to both better understand and adhere to the established norms? Will a school-wide policy reduce inconsistencies in discipline?

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to create a behavior manual for Asa Mercer middle school, in the Seattle School District, located in Seattle, Washington. The plan was designed to include expected behavioral norms that are clearly defined, consequences for violating the norms which were to be clearly defined, and methods for teaching the behavioral expectations and the rationale for them. Methods for obtaining student, teacher, parent and community input were also to be addressed.

Limitations of the Project

This project was developed to create a behavior plan and manual specifically for Asa Mercer middle school, in Seattle Washington. Asa Mercer's staff, student and family demographics and community were all considerations in the project, and therefore the plan may not be appropriate for other schools.

Research

The review of literature for this project was limited to articles, research and books conducted within the last fifteen years. Additional information was gathered from other middle schools in the state of Washington.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this project the following terms were defined.

Discipline: Responses to inappropriate behavior, via well defined classroom and school-wide policies. (Horner, Sugai and Horner, 2000).

Behavior Plan, Behavior Management Plan, Code of Conduct: A written policy that describes appropriate behaviors, consequences and for violation of such behaviors, clearly stated school rules, and benefits/awards for adherence to the policy. (Schimmel, 1997).

Pro-Social Behavior: Behavior that is non-violent, cooperative and compliant with school codes of conduct. (George, Harrower and Knoster 2003).

Bullying: When one child or a group of children repeatedly pick on another child who is seen as weaker or vulnerable. (Washington state office of the Attorney General, 2001).

Zero Tolerance: A policy that describes the immediate suspension or expulsion of students who violate certain rules or policies, usually in reference to weapons, drugs or violent behavior. (Skiba and Peterson, 2000).

Incentives: Policies or methods built into a school-wide behavioral plan that allow both for awards for positive, pro-social behavior, and methods for students who are in trouble to work off some of the consequences. (Zentner, 1999).

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM SELECTED SOURCES

Introduction

A school-wide behavior management plan, according to George, Harrower and Knoster (2003), could be defined as established specific guidelines and proactive support and prevention. Specific guidelines were viewed as a necessary component of behavior plans by Scott (2003), who believed that inconsistencies across adults created unpredictable environments, which led to students testing the differing boundaries. Schimmel (1997) believed that a school-wide conduct code should be used much like other curriculum. Saunter (2001), argued that effective discipline was a matter of student learning, and that school-wide discipline was based on what a student needed to learn, rather than being merely punitive. Additionally, Maag (2001) explained that a prevailing philosophy of many school behavior plans is that of punishing and controlling. Instead, Maag (2001) argued that the goal of effective discipline and behavior management needed to be education of proper behavior along with opportunity to practice and grow competent in what appropriate behavior was defined to be. Walker, Ramsey and Gresham (2003) believed that schools were capable of doing much to minimize bad behavior, and in the process, could advance their main goal of educating children.

The Need for a School-Wide Behavior Management Manual

Nelson, Martella and Marchand-Martella (2002), believed that every child had an educational right to a safe school, and with that in mind, educators needed to explore comprehensive, school-wide approaches to increase the school's ability to work with problem behaviors. The need to address student problem behaviors in today's schools was complex, according to George et al (2003), and consequentially, administrators were spending an extraordinary amount of time addressing issues related to student discipline. Safran and Oswald (2003) found that on the whole, the school-wide use of packaged discipline programs and or curriculum had met with positive outcomes. Scott (2003) described how individual teachers, schools as a whole and the community at large may all have differing expectations and norms regarding appropriate behavior. Furthermore, Scott (2003) explained that that the school-wide analysis of these differences can be utilized to unify teachers and help create an effective school-wide behavior plan that considers where different perspectives in behavior may occur, and then to create proactive measures in order to deal with these issues.

Weinstein, Clarke and Curran (2004) believed that educators interested in classroom and behavior management needed to make cultural diversity an integral part of the conversation. Monroe and Obidah (2004) researched discipline practices in a predominantly African-American classroom, and discovered that cultural understanding between teacher and students contributed to effective classroom management. Often, according to Monroe and Obidah (2004), African-American boys were disciplined disproportionately to other students, and for behaviors that were not intended to be disruptive. This, argued Monroe and Obidah (2004), was important, as effective teachers

of African-American students align their practices and discipline to the student's culture. Before disciplining students, Schwartz (2001) believed that educators should consider the reasons for perceived misbehavior, particularly when related to racial differences between students and teachers. Weinstein et al, (2004) concluded that a lack of multicultural competence would increase a teacher's difficulty with management.

Besides having a plan in place, schools need to also define, teach and support expected student behaviors, asserted Horner, Sugai and Horner, (2000). Additionally, Horner et al (2000) believed that it was more effective to define a small number of behavioral expectations, and to then teach them in order to be pro-active. Schools that did this, they reported, have documented up to a fifty percent reduction in office discipline referrals. Saunter (2001) argued that the school's purpose was to help students take an increased responsibility for their learning and behavior, and to help students acquire an understanding of community values. Maag (2001) asserted that teachers should spend as much time developing pro-active behavior management plans as they do on academic plans. Skiba and Peterson (2003) identified research that found that preventative and instructional methods for working with student behavior were effective in reducing school violence and disruption. Furthermore, Skiba et al, (2003) believed that social curriculum was no less important than academic curriculum. Gaustad (1992) cited research that concluded that problem behaviors can occur due to students not knowing how to act appropriately. Finally, Hester, Gable and Manning (2003) concluded that research had demonstrated the links between the academic success of students and behavior education and programs.

The trend of zero tolerance policies in schools has increased, according to Skiba and Peterson (2000), however, with insufficient results in curbing school violence they concluded. Skiba and Peterson (2000) further argued that these policies are adopted for what they represent to parents, teachers, administrators and community, and not for their overall effectiveness. McEvoy (1999) argued that the issues of school violence and zero tolerance policies must also be evaluated with violence prevention and education programs. In addition, McEvoy (1999) also concluded that information regarding violence prevention and positive behavior programs often was confusing or contradictory, thereby causing teachers and administrators to ignore their value in favor of more reactive and punitive disciplinary policies. Downing and Keaster (1998) believed that the in house suspension program was in most cases a better alternative than student removal from school, as the removed students would often be unsupervised at home, left to pursue activities of their choosing. Horner et al, (2000) determined that policies of punishment and exclusion for problem behaviors, without a balance of teaching and rewarding expected or positive behaviors had been associated with increased truancy, vandalism and dropouts. Safran and Oswald (2003) stated that research had shown that zero tolerance and other reactive, punitive policies may actually increase the incidence and severity of behaviors that they intend to reduce. Horner et al, (2000) summarized their research on get tough policies by stating that it is not enough to have a get tough policy in place without also having a pro-active system in place for teaching and supporting appropriate behavior.

Behavior management codes and plans are only part of what is needed for a positive school climate, argued Horner et al, (2000). Safran and Oswald (2003) believed

that in addition, violence prevention programs and positive reinforcement systems would be effective in creating a positive school climate. Walker (2001) described how student conferencing programs could be effective in getting offending students to analyze and reflect on their behavior, without having punitive costs. According to Smith and Sandhu (2004), the use of social problem solving curriculum was an important factor in the creation of a safe school. Teaching practices, along with effective discipline and behavior education programs was also an important component of creating a positive learning environment. Zentner (1999) reported on the effectiveness of a program that allowed students to earn off disciplinary infractions via tutoring, volunteerism, school cleanup and clerical duties. Nelson et al (2002), George et al, (2003), Safran and Oswald (2003) and Scott (2003) all examined the usage of positive behavioral support programs in conjunction with conduct codes, preventative measures and behavior management programs. The efforts of schools to effectively utilize both the family unit and community resources in attempts to create safe and positive learning environments was examined by Sheldon and Epstein (2002), with their conclusion that these efforts could have a positive effect, provided they were only part of many strategies used by the school.

Components of a School-Wide Behavior Management Manual

According to the combined research of DiLullo (2004), Schimmel (1997) and Skiba and Peterson (2000 and 2003), there were several necessary components in a school-wide behavior management plan. Those components included:

1. Open for Discussion/Debate
2. Clear, Concise and Relevant

3. Manual as an Educational Tool
4. Providing Consistency
5. Rewards and Redemption

Open for Discussion and Debate

Nelson et al (2002) reported that schools needed to discuss policies and preventative measures regularly, in order to evaluate shortcomings of their current disciplinary problems, as well as to examine potential problem areas. DiLullo (2004) described how a committee with students, parents, teachers and administrators was formed to overhaul an out of date school conduct code. After the plan was updated, the committee then had at least three follow up meetings every year thereafter, in order to keep the plan current. Inclusion of students in the discussion and creation of behavior plans, argued Schimmel (1997) and Cotton (1990), would provide them with a sense of ownership that may otherwise would not come without their participation. Scott (2003) identified the need to have staff analyze disciplinary data, in order to effectively evaluate strategies and policies. Skiba and Peterson (2000) reported that school-wide discipline plans and behavior support teams helped to build consistency and communication, which were key elements in effectively responding to disruptive behavior. Freiberg (1998) believed that communication was necessary between all members of the learning environment in order to obtain continual feedback regarding the school climate, and that feedback and discussion of the school climate could be used to develop strategies for addressing and correcting climate and behavioral concerns. Weinstein et al, (2004) described the need to have discussions based on student diversity, stating that teachers needed to examine different approaches to discipline and potential cultural conflicts.

Lecheler, Rosen, Limbaugh, Baum, et al. (2003) argued that while discipline codes were important, there needed to be room for discretion and case-by-case decisions. This discussion of incidents on a case-by-case basis, Lecheler et al (2003) continued, could then be incorporated into future policy. Cotton (1990) concluded that significant improvements in student behavior were obtained in schools where discipline policy review and revision were regularly conducted, with input from teachers, administration and students. Schimmel (1997) cited research in social psychology that concluded that people would more voluntarily comply with rules when given the opportunity to participate in their discussion.

Clear, Concise and Relevant

Schimmel (1997) postulated that some rules were so vague that reasonable students and administrators interpret them differently. Some examples, according to Schimmel (1997) were no inappropriate clothing, no fooling around, and no clothing that detracts from the general instructional atmosphere. Clear rules and expectations, according to Shellady and Sealander (2003) allow for student engagement in appropriate behaviors to be observable, measurable and acknowledged by others in the school. McIntyre (2004) determined that students were more likely to follow rules when they were known to all, clearly stated, fairly and consistently enforced, and viewed by all as being important to the common good. Cotton (1990) believed that research had shown that vague and unenforceable rules such as be in the right place at the right time contributed to the overall ineffectiveness of a discipline plan. Shanker (1995) argued that codes of conduct and punishments should be spelled out in advance in order to eliminate unfairness and prejudice. Walker et al, (2003) felt that a school-wide behavior code

should only consist of between five and seven rules, but that those few rules would be well defined with numerous examples. Hester et al, (2003) reported that effective middle school educators give clear and precise instruction, behavioral expectations and consequences for both compliance and non-compliance. Conversely, Sheldon and Epstein (2002) believed that unfair and unclear rules, along with inconsistent responses to student misbehavior and disagreement amongst teachers and administrators regarding rules and enforcement all were characteristics of disorderly schools.

Manual as an Educational Tool

Gaustad (1992), Hester et al, (2003), Nelson et al, (2002) and Pedrotti (2004) all concluded that behavior education and repeated instruction of rules and consequences were effective practices in increasing positive student behavior. Fitzsimmons (1998) identified the need for teachers to believe that instruction could improve behavior, and that behavioral instruction was a part of teaching. Scott (2003) explained that proactive schools included explicit instructions of expected behaviors, and that school personnel have an obligation to teach behaviors that are predictive of success in the world outside of school. Walker et al, (2003) described the teaching and enforcing of school behavior codes as being a universal prevention method. Walker (2001) suggested that it was not enough to merely tell students that their behavior was wrong, as participatory education was more effective than lectures. Horner et al, (2000) argued that it would be naïve to assume that students arrive to school with all of the necessary social skills, and therefore those skills must be taught. George et al, (2003) proposed that the first level of prevention involved the process of teaching and acknowledging student adherence to established behavioral expectations. Safran and Oswald (2003) addressed the need for

schools to both teach behavioral expectations and to then provide structured opportunities for students to practice those expectations. In agreement, Taylor and Baker (2001) contended that by practicing and reflecting on beneficial behaviors, all students can practice showing concern, courtesy and showing support for one another.

Providing Consistency

One of the elements in creating a school-wide program for promoting positive social behaviors was establishing clear and consistent behavioral expectations, according to Nelson et al, (2002). DiLullo (2004) reported on efforts to revise a school conduct code initially established in 1960, which contained outdated policies that were not being uniformly enforced by all staff. Further, DiLullo (2004) explained that consequences under the old policy were often left to teacher discretion, and therefore were not applied consistently. Schimmel (1997) reasoned that vague rules would be interpreted differently depending upon the person, resulting in school rules being viewed cynically by students. Additionally, Schimmel (1997) argued that student handbooks needed to contain consistent policies for student rights and procedures. Scott (2003) asserted that without consistently applied expectations and consequences, schools risked the creation of unstable environments where students would continually test limits. Skiba and Peterson (2000) reported on statistics and research that have shown that the uneven and inconsistent application of disciplinary measures is common, and that school attributes were the most common indicator of such inconsistencies. Later, Skiba and Peterson (2003) explained that the ramifications of inconsistencies in expectations, rules and consequences were unfair applications of discipline, the loss of teachable opportunities for behavior and expectations, and students receiving conflicting messages about

appropriate classroom and school behaviors. Saunter (2001) believed that in order to maintain consistency of rule enforcement throughout the school, the entire school community needed to understand and support the code of conduct. Shanker (1995) argued that it would be appropriate for states to legally mandate that all schools have a clear behavior conduct code that is enforced consistently, with financial penalties for those schools or districts which either do not have a code or do not apply it evenly.

Rewards and Redemption

An important factor in implementing a school-wide behavior management program, according to George et al, (2003) was to schedule dates for teaching expected behaviors as well as dates for administering rewards for the compliance of those behaviors. Safran and Oswald (2003) reported on the implementation of a token system at the middle school level, where positive behaviors were rewarded with a coupon, to later be used for a tangible reward. DiLullo (2004) described a system where point values were assigned to specific infractions, all of which was in the conduct code, clearly defined. Further, students had the opportunity to work off accumulated infraction points by participating in community service. In agreement, Zentner (1999) reported on a system where students could redeem themselves of accumulated infraction points by participating in community service, school beautification projects, tutoring and other volunteerism. Further, Zentner (1999) elaborated on a program where rewards were given randomly every two weeks to students who were clear of any negative infraction points. While the rewards were unannounced and varied, students were aware that they did occur on this semi-regular basis, explained Zentner (1999).

Differing from this viewpoint, Kohn (2003) and Brandt (1995), argued that positive reinforcement was merely manipulation on the part of teachers to get students to do whatever it is that pleases them, thereby making student approval contingent upon teacher satisfaction. Maag (2001) explained that techniques based upon positive reinforcement have often been misunderstood, despite significant research that had proven these methods to be effective.

Summary

Consistency, education, relevance, rewards and the agreement to be open to changes are at the center of effective middle school discipline and behavior management plans, according to the research. The plan must be agreed upon by the whole staff, and must be utilized and enforced with consistency by all staff and administrators. Therefore, there will be a need for a regularly scheduled forum or meeting time in order to discuss the implementation of the plan, enforcement issues, and changes that will need to be made. This process should involve all stakeholders in the matter, which includes students, parents and community, according to Shellady and Sealander (2003). The necessity of regularly scheduled meetings is also important, in order to facilitate staff acceptance of the policy, dissemination of information, constant evaluation of the plan, and support from the community.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this project was to create a behavior management manual for Asa Mercer middle school. To accomplish this goal, a review of recent related literature and research was conducted and the information was analyzed. Additional information from selected middle schools was obtained.

Need for the Project

“The need to address student problem behavior in both general and special education settings in today’s schools is complex. In response, many administrators are spending an extraordinary amount of time addressing issues related to student discipline. Not only have administrators, faculty, staff, and parents expressed frustration with ever-increasing disciplinary matters, but they also report concern that both teaching and learning have been negatively affected as a result.” (George & Harrower, 2003, pp.1-2).

Asa Mercer middle school is in the Seattle School District, located in the Beacon Hill neighborhood. While many behavioral rules and guidelines are present at Asa Mercer, a former system of behavior management, called “Honor Level” was eliminated at the end of the 2003-2004 school year. A committee was formed to look into bringing in a new system, but nothing had been found that fit the needs of our school. Additionally, according to a staff survey regarding discipline, many teachers felt that the former system, which clearly defined rules, consequences and rewards, was very effective, regretting the decision to eliminate it. According to staff at Asa Mercer, the lack of a non uniform behavioral management policy is working for some, but not for all.

Furthermore, many staff members at Asa Mercer believed that the lack of a consistent policy allowed for differing sanctions depending upon the administrator handling the incident. Finally, staff members at Mercer believed that there was a strong connection between academic success and appropriate school behavior, and therefore felt that without a strong behavior management plan, academic achievement could potentially falter.

Procedures of the Project

The writer undertook the following procedures to develop a behavior management manual for Asa Mercer Middle School.

- An extensive review of recent related literature was completed.
- Recent survey results were examined, looking for commonalities.
- Examination of the transformation plan aspects that dealt with behavior
- Joining the disciplinary committee.
- Attending a behavior management and discipline conference.
- Analyzing the Seattle Public Schools Code of Prohibited Conduct.
- Analyzing behavior management policies from the following schools:
 - Sandy Spring Friends Middle School, Sandy Spring, Maryland
 - Gunston Middle School, Arlington, Virginia
 - Morris E. Ford Middle School, Tacoma, Washington
 - Whitman Middle School, Seattle, Washington.

Planned Implementation of the Project

Upon completion, the behavior management manual will be shared with the administration of Asa Mercer, with goal of presenting the plan to the staff for discussion and approval. The likely timeline and channels will include August professional development days, and review by both the Mercer Leadership Team and the Instructional Council.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

The purpose of this project was to develop a schoolwide behavior management manual for Asa Mercer Middle School. The plan would incorporate both proactive strategies for prevention of disruptive behavior as well as policies for dealing with disruptive behavior. Furthermore, the manual was developed out of a need for a comprehensive and uniform policy at Asa Mercer. It was designed to be concise, relevant to Asa Mercer's population, and easy to use. Within the manual, there would be components for positive reinforcement and rewards, as well as methods and opportunities for teaching appropriate behaviors inherent. Finally, the manual was meant to be a continuous work in action, to be examined regularly by staff in order to adapt any components which either did not work efficiently or which were no longer relevant to Asa Mercer and the school community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

MANUAL	P2
PURPOSE OF MANUAL.....	P3
THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.....	P3
PRESENTATION PROCESS.....	P3-4
STAFF SURVEY.....	P4

SECTION TWO: DISCUSSION AND DEBATE.....P5

METHODS TO ENSURE ONGOING DISCUSSION.....	P-6
METHODS TO ENSURE STUDENT AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT.....	P-7
Parent Survey to Gather Feedback on the Manual/Policy.....	P-8

SECTION THREE: A CLEAR, CONCISE AND RELEVANT MANUAL.....P-9

Comments Regarding Seattle Public School's Code of Prohibited Conduct...	P-10
Comments Regarding the General Asa Mercer Discipline Policy.....	P-10
COVER SHEET.....	P-11
EXPECTED BEHAVIORS FOR OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM.....	P-12
Hallway behaviors.....	P-12
Tardy definition and policy.....	P-12
Lunchroom expectations.....	P-13
Assembly expectations.....	P-13
Library expectations.....	P-13
Field trips.....	P-13

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS INSIDE THE CLASSROOM.....	P-14
Classroom behavior expectations.....	P-14
Reminders on creating a positive environment.....	P-14
Reminders on district policy and criminal offenses.....	P-14
OTHER EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS.....	P-15
Cheating and honesty.....	P-15
Bullying and bystanders.....	P-15
Apologizing.....	P-16
Monthly Mustang Recognition.....	P-16
Pride Cards.....	P-17
SECTION FOUR: BEHAVIOR MANUAL AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL.....	P-17
Commentary on using the manual as a teaching tool.....	P-18
THE MONDAY CLASS MEETING.....	P-18
Explanation of the Monday class meetings.....	P-18
Using the handbook to select topics for discussion.....	P-19
Suggested possible topics for discussion.....	P-19-20
ESTABLISHING CLASSROOM RULES AND NORMS.....	P-20
Using the handbook to discuss class norms.....	P-20
Possible discussion topics for classroom behavior norms.....	P-21
OTHER CLASSROOM AND EDUCATIONAL USES.....	P-22-23
SECTION FIVE: PROVIDING CONSISTENCY.....	P-24

Consistency as related to school discipline.....	P-25
Consistency in student behavioral expectations.....	P-25-26
Consistency in teacher expectations.....	P-27
SECTION SIX: REWARDS AND REDEMPTION.....	P-28
General comments on rewards and the behavior manual.....	P-29
Apologizing.....	P-29-30
Redemption and making wrong actions right.....	P-30
Working off detention and choices.....	P-31
Rewards.....	P-32
Sample Mustang Recognition eligibility form.....	P-33
Pride Cards.....	P-33-34
REFERENCES.....	P-35-36

SECTION ONE

An Introduction to Mercer's Behavior Management Manual

“We also found that strong limit-setting and discipline played a significant role in the young men’s development. Many parents knew how to set limits and to follow through with consistency. These parents did not apologize for being strict or demanding because they made it clear that they were motivated by love. Although in some cases their children did not like the discipline at the time, the sons came to understand later in their development that it was done in their interest.”

Freeman A. Hrabowski, Kenneth I. Maton and Geoffrey L. Greif, p.195.

Purpose of the Manual

At Asa Mercer Middle School, we want students to become responsible for their actions and the consequences of them. The rules and procedures in the behavior manual will clearly outline the expectations that the staff, parents and community have for our students. To help students with adhering to these expectations, examples of what compliance and non-compliance are given, and rewards and consequences are clearly defined. The opportunity to use the manual as an educational tool will also reflect the belief that before students can be in a position to learn, they must know how to be in a learning position.

The Development Process

The writer of this plan began by reviewing the disciplinary process currently in use, and compared it with other plans being implemented in other buildings. Additionally, staff surveys around the topic of discipline were studied to determine what priorities and needs existed within the building. Next, the writer joined a discipline committee to further study the unique needs of the building and to determine any obstacles for implementing new policies. Finally, an extensive review of current related literature was conducted.

The Presentation Process

The Behavior Management Manual for Asa Mercer Middle School will be presented by the writer to the Building Leadership Team and the Instructional Council before the beginning of the 2005-2006 school year. At that point, the plan would likely be ready to be shared with staff, which the writer will do. Some components, and

preliminary conclusions drawn by the writer have already been discussed with the administration of Asa Mercer prior to the completion of the project. One possible method for utilizing the handbook would be to include the pages in the student planners we purchase for each student and staff member each year.

Staff Survey

The Asa Mercer staff, in December of 2004, constructed a list of disciplinary issues that were high priority issues. The staff had started the year without the disciplinary/behavioral management system (Honor Level) that had been used for the last six years prior to the start of the 2004-2005 year. This meant a return to a system where major disciplinary issues were to be referred to administrators, and perceived minor issues to be handled by the teacher. Therefore, the questions were based on what was working well, or not working well with the current system.

Several issues, such as tardy policy, had to be addressed several times additionally throughout the year, by both grade level teams and a disciplinary review committee. Other ideas, such as having buddy teachers or time out rooms also were invented by the staff as we went along. All of these factors, along with the overall consensus of the survey have been closely examined by me in the construction of a set of rules and procedures for student behavior.

SECTION TWO

Discussion and Debate

“If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do, and how to do it.” Abraham Lincoln, Speech, June 16, 1858.

Methods to Ensure Ongoing Discussion

The behavior management manual needs to be flexible enough to adapt to changes that happen over the course of time. Rules may become irrelevant as behaviors in certain areas improve, or the need to add an additional rule due to a different schedule or campus changes may occur. Furthermore, the severity of how a rule violation is treated may need to be increased or alleviated, due to the changing nature of student behavior over time. Additionally, the relevance of rules will need to be examined on a regular basis, in order to adhere to the idea of keeping the manual as concise as possible. An example of this would be having rules regarding wood or metal shops in a rulebook or manual when those classes are no longer being offered.

I propose the establishment of a discipline and behavior management committee that would meet on a monthly basis in order to keep the conversations surrounding behavior and discipline ongoing. This would include:

- a. One teacher per grade level
- b. One counselor
- c. At least one administrator, but preferably the principal and one assistant
- d. One office staff or secretarial position member, as they likely will be the first people contacted by parents
- e. One or two student representatives. I see one member from the student government and one at large
- f. One or two parent members.

Anything larger than this committee would likely be too large to conduct effective meetings and allow for all parties to be fully heard.

Methods to Ensure Student and Parent Involvement

The discipline and behavior management committee, along with having parent and student representation, should also be open to receiving and incorporating information obtained from students, parents and the community at large. While specific incidents involving students should be directly heard and managed by administration, a forum or information gathering plan should also be in place for general comments. I propose the following:

- A yearly survey to be sent home to all Asa Mercer families each year (included below) that simply asks for input and comments on the discipline and behavior management policy.
- An annual open forum meeting with members of the committee, administration and any Asa Mercer students, families or community members who wish to attend. Any concerns or feedback generated from this meeting could then be incorporated into revised versions of the manual.

The Parent/Family Survey for the Asa Mercer Behavior Policy

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are attempting to gather feedback on how to make things work better at Asa Mercer. Please take a few moments to answer the following questions about the behavior and discipline policies at Asa Mercer and return it to school.

1. Have you seen the behavior management or school rules section in your student's planner?
2. What policies do you feel are working well?
3. What policies do you feel we should revise, and what changes would you make to them?
4. Are there any rules or policies that you would like to see included in the plan that are currently not there?

SECTION THREE

A Clear, Concise and Relevant Behavior Management Manual

“Get rid of your forty-seven-page student handbook. Get rid of your lists of rules and regulations, lists of can't's and don'ts. We replaced our forty-seven-page student handbook with a glossy student folder....Rather than defining bad behavior and its punishments, the folder describes appropriate behavior and its benefits.” Barry Raebeck, pp.21-22.

Comments Regarding Seattle Public Schools Code of Prohibited Conduct

All disciplinary and behavioral components of this plan comply with the school district policy already set in place. Furthermore, I will only briefly address rules and disciplinary measures that are within the district policy, rather taking the time to address the discipline and behavioral expectations that are not detailed there. Incidents involving weapons, sexual harassment and fighting are explicitly detailed in Seattle's plan, and we are expected to comply with it at all times.

Comments Regarding the General Asa Mercer Discipline Policy

The behavior management manual is intended to be a student document, with additional resources and pages for staff to use as educational suggestions and resources. The intent is not to completely rewrite or create a discipline system, which would be a completely different project. However, it will be necessary to write additional components and suggestions for incorporation into the discipline system, in order to both make the behavior manual an effective, usable document, and to fit the findings of the research.

ASA MERCER MUSTANGS

STUDENT BEHAVIOR MANUAL

The Mustang Creed:

Work hard, for hard work makes for excellent results.

Study hard, for good study habits build a strong mind.

Respect everyone, for in return I will receive respect.

Do my best in everything I do, for to do otherwise is to do
nothing.

Mustang creed adapted with permission from The Belief Academy , Seattle Public Schools.

Student Behavior Expectations Outside of the Classroom

Hallway behavior guidelines:

- Walk in the halls at all times.
- Don't intentionally push, trip or touch other people.
- Respect others: Use quiet, conversational tones of voice, as other classes are in session while you are in the halls.
- Store backpacks, bags, coats and other personal items in the lockers, and be sure to keep the lockers clean.
- Respond honestly and respectfully to adults when asked a question.

Helpful tips:

- Allow yourself enough time to get to your next class by keeping hallway visits and conversations short.
- Clean out old papers, lunches and other garbage from the locker at least once a week. Also, don't put anything up in or on the locker that can't come out.
- Play fighting is not allowed, as it can both hurt other bystanders as well as lead to a more heated argument.

Tardy Policy:

Be in your seat before the bell rings, with all necessary materials out and ready. Therefore, have books out, paper ready and pencils sharpened by the bell.

Examples of being tardy that you can avoid with a little bit of effort:

- Entering the room when the bell rings, but not being seated.
- Being in your seat, but without materials out and ready.
- Having to go back to your locker after being in the room "on time" because you forgot something, or going back in the hall to socialize with friends.

Lunchroom Expectations:

- While lined up to get your lunch, respect others by not pushing or cutting. Stay in a single file line.
- Don't throw food or create a mess on purpose. Clean up any accidents, and see an adult if you need assistance.
- When finished, clean your space, throw away any garbage, and put your trays back. Then you may leave.
- Keep all food and drink in the lunchroom unless you have permission to take a lunch to a classroom or detention room.
- Talk using quiet, conversational tones.

Assembly Expectations:

- Sit with your class, and remain quiet until the program starts.
- Respect the program and the participants/performers by not talking or making noise during the presentation.
- Show respect with applause and cheering when the program is finished.
- Keep booing or disrespectful comments to yourself.

Library Expectations:

- Comply with any requests the librarian has for you.
- Show your respect to those who are studying and working by keeping your voices quiet.
- Return all materials when or before they are due.

Field Trip Expectations:

- Represent your school, classmates, teachers and community with dignity at all times. Don't give the public an opportunity to think badly of you.
- All school rules for hallway and assembly behavior apply to being outside of the classroom.
- Comply with the requests and rules that apply to the location or presentation you are at.

Student Behavior Expectations Inside the Classroom

- Be on time, and wait for permission to clean up/pack up.
- Respect yourself and others by following all directions from your teachers and substitutes.
- Remember the tardy policy: Have ready all of the necessary materials you'll need for each class.
- No put-downs or insults are allowed.
- Follow and respect the unique rules and conditions of every classroom.

Helpful reminders and tips for creating a positive class environment:

- Put-downs, even when framed as a joke, are still put-downs, and could be considered harassment.
- Teachers often give reminders about homework, assignments and upcoming tests at the end of the period, so remain quiet and focused until you are excused.
- The difference between an A and a C is often just a few extra minutes.
- Respect yourself and your friends by allowing everyone, including yourself, to get the work done. This means you may not want to sit by people that you'll be tempted to talk with.
- Be selective when asking permission to leave the classroom. Your teacher doesn't have to allow you to leave, and may say no if you ask too often.
- Leave items in your locker that do not have anything to do with your classes. This will save you the problem of having to get it back from the teacher later.

Reminder on district policies and criminal offenses:

The following are all prohibited behaviors according to the Seattle School District Code of Conduct. Many are also criminal offenses, and may result in long-term suspension, emergency expulsion, or police involvement.

- Harassment (bullying, sexual harassment, persistent teasing unwanted contact)
- Fighting
- Fireworks or explosives possession
- Gambling
- Alcohol and drug use or possession
- Possession of weapons, either real or fake
- Arson
- Assault, burglary, robbery, extortion, blackmail, coercion, theft, or possession of stolen materials
- Malicious mischief (damaging property)
- Misrepresentation to, or interference with authority
- False reporting of fire alarm/pulling fire alarms/bomb threats
- Gang activity, gang initiation

Cheating and honesty

Cheating and academic dishonesty are not allowed at Asa Mercer. Assignments and tests are meant to measure what you have learned, in order to give the teacher information on what needs to be reviewed more, and what doesn't need to be covered more.

Remember these things:

- One poor test or assignment generally will not ruin your grade for the entire quarter. Therefore, don't feel pressure to cheat.
- Helping someone on a test or quiz in any way is regarded as cheating, even if you are only allowing someone to look at your answers. This is not respecting yourself, or the other person.
- Working with others on an assignment is normally acceptable, unless you are given specific instructions to not do so.
- Having others do work for you, or copy answers for you is considered cheating.
- Respect yourself by being prepared enough to not have to cheat. Also, if you are struggling with things in a class, let the teacher know.

Bullying and being a bystander

Besides the actual acts involved with bullying, one can also be a part of the problem if they are a spectator. Often bullies want an audience, as it makes the harassment more embarrassing for the victim.

Remember these things:

- There is a big difference between informing and tattling. Informing an adult of what is happening is an act of courage, strength and safety. It can stop someone from getting hurt, can prevent further harassment, and may prevent someone you know from getting in more serious trouble later.
- Find a way to help without getting hurt. You could say "Stop, this isn't going to solve anything," or many other things in order to redirect the bullies attention. This is a good discussion to have with your teachers.
- Don't cheer, or even quietly watch a conflict, as it only encourages the bully who is trying to be the center of attention, and also puts more pressure on the bully to escalate the harassment and violence.
- Respect yourself and others by being a positive role model. Find ways to get what you want and make friends by not teasing, threatening or attacking.
- Attempt to include other students who tend to be victims, both in class and outside of class.

Apologizing

One of the most important things to do when you make a mistake or act inappropriately is to later go back and apologize to those you may have upset. As a matter of respecting yourself and others, please reflect on your behaviors at Asa Mercer, and make appropriate apologies when necessary.

Remember these things:

- Trust and respect are not given, they are earned.
- Written letters of apology go a long way toward rebuilding relationships and redeeming yourself in the eyes of others.
- Be sure to say you are sorry upon realizing that you have done something wrong.
- The truest and most sincere apologies are when you do not repeat the offending behavior.
- Always try to make things right. This can mean replacing anything you break or damage, or offering to help someone do or fix something.
- When receiving a sincere apology, you should attempt to thank the other person for apologizing. If you are still upset, talk with a teacher or counselor, but do not take any further actions against the other person.

Regardless of the disciplinary consequences of your behavior, you will always be given the opportunity to amend your behaviors. In some cases, this may be the disciplinary action, and in other cases, it will be one part of the process.

Monthly Mustang Recognition

Students who comply with all of the behavioral expectations outlined in this manual will be eligible to partake in monthly activities in order to celebrate their outstanding behavior, mustang pride and our gratitude for making Mercer an outstanding school. Listen for announcements about what activities are coming up, and list them here.

September _____ October _____
November _____ January _____
March _____ May _____

Pride Cards

When you are seen acting in a positive way, being helpful, or behaving in an outstanding way, teachers will look to give you pride cards. These can be used for weekly drawings and larger prize auctions throughout the year. Be sure to save them up.

SECTION FOUR

The Behavior Manual as an Educational Tool

“Clearly structured behavioral parameters do not necessarily provide students with an understanding of *why* it is important to follow rules governing conduct. Without understanding of or involvement in the development of rules, the drive to respect, cooperate, and collaborate with teachers and peers in fundamental extrinsic and requires repeated reinforcements, positive or negative, from outside. In contrast, ensuring that students understand and have the opportunity to shape norms of behavior stimulates their intrinsic motivation to observe school rules because it taps into and supports students’ own understanding of what is fair and just.” Jackson, Anthony W. and Davis, Gayle A. p. 171

General Commentary on Teaching Behavior

Throughout the research and review of literature stages of this project, the concept of teaching behavior was commented on by many researchers. If we are to consider middle school students as being adolescents who are both learning curriculum as well as learning how to become adults, then behavior and socialization become key teachable areas. What follows are suggestions and possible implementation strategies for using the behavior manual as a resource in the classroom. I will attempt to utilize existing school time structures when possible in order to minimize disruption and to show how we can work this document easily into the fabric of our school day.

The Monday Class Meetings

As part of our mandate to incorporate anti-bullying and harassment education into our curriculum, Asa Mercer has created a class meeting protocol that is used every Monday, from 9:40 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in place of school-wide silent reading that normally occurs during that time during the other days of the week. Currently, topics and curriculum are based on the Olweus program, which was adopted by our school in order to use for specific purpose of anti-bullying education.

The normal protocol used for class meetings is to arrange seats so that the students can all see each other easily, and then to introduce a topic of discussion, or written exercise designed to allow students to view bullying situations from the perspective of others.

The student handbook makes reference to bullying and harassment, and I believe that the ideas and reminders listed there can be used as starting points to begin class discussions, role plays and written explorations.

Some Suggested Topics for Classroom Discussions Based on the Student Handbook

- How do you handle insults or put-downs? How can you do it without using put-downs yourself?
- What are some ways to help a friend who is getting bullied?
- What is the difference between informing and tattling?
- What can you do if someone you know, or a friend of yours is bullying another student?
- What are some ways that you can reach out to students who are not normally included in activities?
- What does it mean to respect everybody?
- What do you think “In order to gain respect, one must give it” means? How can you apply that to your life?
- What are some ways that you can give and receive compliments? Apologies?
- How not to be a target of bullying.
- How do you show self esteem? Are there different ways to show self esteem in and out of school?
- What is harassment? How is this, or is it different from bullying?

- Ostracism. What is it? How can you help someone who is going through it?

How can you avoid it?

Establishing Classroom Rules and Norms

At the beginning of the year, one might consider using the handbook and student participation in creating a set of norms for the classroom. While teacher rules regarding logistics still apply, perhaps as personal rules of teacher “x”, students may benefit from participating in the process of setting up the behavioral norms and expectations of the class. (adapted with permission from Quality in Education Manual, Evans and Fitch)

Using the Behavior Manual in Establishing Classroom Norms

1. Announce to the class that they will have an opportunity to input their feelings and opinions for a set of classroom rules and norms.
2. Have the class then read the manual, asking them to consider how they would like to see these behavioral expectations applied in the class.
3. Ask the class to write down on a sheet of paper the things they want to see happen in the class, especially regarding work atmosphere, the way people are treated by the teacher and students, opportunities to collaborate with other students, and other behavior and atmosphere ideas.
4. Collect the ideas, look them over and have a discussion with the class on what commonalities there were.
5. Arrange and edit the comments into five or six major statements. Print them on a sheet of paper, and discuss again with the class. When it seems as if most everyone agrees to the statements, pass them around, and have each student sign his or her name on the sheet.
6. Make a copy of the signed norms and expectations sheet for all students. Have them keep it in their 3-ring notebook and make reference to it when applicable.

Possible Discussion Topics for Classroom Norms

Besides the classroom meetings on Mondays, there may be times when it is necessary to discuss class behavior during other, non-scheduled times. This may be out of choice, or as student behavior necessitates. Some portions of the manual may be useful for referencing or discussing during these opportunities for behavioral learning. Some ideas for generating thinking and discussing during these times are as follows.

- Copy the Mustang creed. What does it mean to you? How can you apply this every day at Mercer?
- What does “Do your best in everything you do, for to do otherwise is to do nothing?” How is not trying related to self esteem? How is it related to not respecting teachers or yourself?
- Read over the section on cheating. How is helping someone on a test *not* respecting them or yourself?
- Why is it important to respond honestly and respectfully to teacher and adult requests?
- Why do you think adults make a big deal out of play fighting, especially in school?
- When you go on a field trip, why is it important to act in a respectful manner? What preconceived ideas do many adults who are not teachers have about middle school students and young adults?

Other Classroom Uses for the Behavior Manual

While the behavior manual is not meant to replace or cross over into the realm of a discipline policy, there are some opportunities that will arise within the classroom setting that allow for the manual to be used in lieu of an administrative disciplinary action. Further, the manual can be used in some circumstances as a first step in classroom discipline, along with home communication by the teacher, before more serious disciplinary actions are taken. Some possible examples and circumstances are detailed below.

- For a student who has earned a second tardy, a teacher may wish to have the student read and copy the tardy policy. Next, a tardy avoidance plan, based on the manual can be created. The student will list the reasons why they have been tardy, and list some steps they will take to avoid these issues in the future. After this is done, it will be signed by both the student and teacher (with copies made for parent and grade level administrator or counselor), and be kept in the student's 3-ring notebook for reference.
- Similarly, with students struggling with behavior issues, the planner can be used as a first step in setting up a behavior contract. Issues such as talk-outs, coming into class unprepared (no pencil, paper, etc.) and leaving things in the locker are all possibilities.

- While more serious behavioral issues such as harassment and put-downs should be dealt with at the administrative level, impromptu class meetings or reviews of the manual can be conducted at any moment. I would suggest that if a disrespectful comment or put-down happens in class, to have the class take out the manual and re-read that section.
- Related to this, students should review the manual, especially the apology section, and be asked to write an apology letter.
- Have the class create a substitute behavior policy. After having the class read the manual, particularly the sections and items regarding respecting themselves and other adults, have them create a list of things and behaviors they will do when a substitute, or any guest presenter/teacher is in the classroom.
- Before attending any assemblies or field trips, a review of the corresponding sections and brief discussion on expected behaviors may be useful.

SECTION FIVE

Providing Consistency

“The trajectory of a young adolescent’s life is not wholly determined by social and economic circumstances. The soundness of choices he or she makes and the guidance available to make good decisions are critically important.” Jackson, Anthony W. and Davis, Gayle A. p.8

Consistency as Related to School Discipline

By providing the behavior manual to each student, and agreeing to utilize it as a teaching tool, students will be reminded on a regular basis of what is expected of them behaviorally. In this manner, the manual can serve as a list or series of things to do, as opposed to rule violations, or things to not do. Further, by placing our emphasis on teaching appropriate behaviors, Asa Mercer staff can reasonably expect that students will be regularly and consistently exposed to proper behavior protocol. This in turn may help us decrease the number and severity of disciplinary actions.

Related to this idea is the concept of having students review portions of the behavior manual as part of the disciplinary process. This will provide a consistent opportunity for reviewing positive behavioral expectations, and allow Asa Mercer staff to have insurances that behavioral expectations are being regularly taught and reviewed.

Consistency in Student Behavioral Expectations

By making the manual frequently utilized, or operational, we can expect that all students in the school will be exposed to the same appropriate behavioral norms. This eliminates any issues with expectations not being taught or covered the same by all teachers. By agreeing to use the manual in this prescribed manner, all students are taught proper behavioral expectations inside each classroom, upon receiving any disciplinary actions, and upon embarking on any field trips or outside of school functions.

The student benefits of being consistent in our application of the manual can be seen as the following:

- All students are being taught the same behavioral norms, which may not be happening outside of school.
- Students may begin to feel a sense of security, comfort and or stability in knowing that Asa Mercer staff have the same behavioral expectations for all students.
- The number of rule violations and or the severity of those violations may decrease as behavior education becomes a normalized part of our curriculum.
- Due to the possible decrease in rule violations, student achievement may rise as more time is spent in class than in other places, such as an administrator's office or the counseling office.
- As the behavioral expectations become known and internalized by students, the potential for a decrease in the number of bullying incidents exists. This in turn could eliminate the negative consequences of bullying, such as absenteeism of victims, office and counseling department referrals and suspensions. The handbook therefore would work in cohesion with our anti-bullying curriculum and programs.
- Students will know that each teacher has the same expectations, and will be less successful in their attempts to get away with unacceptable behavior. Also, as teachers, we are not allowing students the opportunity to attempt to get away with things in certain classes.
- An improved, and calmer school climate.
- An increase in students and families making Asa Mercer their first choice for placement.

Consistency in Teacher Expectations

By regularly utilizing the behavior manual, teachers, administrators, other staff and other adults in the building may find that there is a change in adult expectations.

Along with this, there may be some changes in adult feelings regarding students and the workplace environment, due to the consistency of teaching behavior and utilizing the manual. Some of the changes and adult benefits of the consistent use of the manual are as follows:

- Adults will need to regard behavioral education as a significant part of the curriculum, with the idea that time spent on behavior towards the beginning of the year will allow for more time to be spent on subject matter curriculum during the rest of the year.
- Adults will hold each other accountable for teaching behavior, as we can all be expected to use the same tool in the same manner. Related to a point above, we will not unwittingly create rooms where some behaviors are acceptable and rooms where the same behaviors are not tolerated.
- Adults will treat all students according to the same set of behavioral standards.
- Teachers, substitutes, parents and community members will be more willing to teach, substitute, and participate in activities at Asa Mercer.
- The entire staff can help eliminate the excuse of student's not knowing what is appropriate or acceptable at school by uniformly teaching appropriate behaviors and referencing the manual.

SECTION SIX

Rewards and Redemptions

“Problems are negative and produce few winners, but if you can change a problem into an opportunity, then there are gains in the situation.” Smith, Wilma A. and Andrews, Richard L. p. 77

General Comments on Rewards and the Behavior Manual

This section is where the potential for crossing the line between behavior manual and disciplinary policy is at the greatest. Under Mercer's old discipline policy of Honor Level, a student would earn infraction points based upon the number and severity of rule violations accumulated. After certain levels, or steps were passed, students would be assigned detention time. This would escalate from 15 minutes at lunch to 1 hour after school. Further Saturday school sessions lasting up to 4 hours were also possible for more drastic accumulations of infraction points.

While we have eliminated most of this structure, the lunch detentions and a Friday version of the Saturday school do still exist. Infraction points are not kept track of, but rather referrals to administrators and counselors, along with diligent record keeping by teachers are what can determine the detention time.

While I am not going to attempt a re-write of this policy, I will suggest some actions that may allow students to feel that they have some control over their actions, including what the consequences of their behavior will be. Further, I believe these actions can allow students to fully grasp the scope and nature of inappropriate behavior, and how it affects the whole learning community.

Apologizing

By placing emphasis on proper behavior and respect, I believe the apology section of the behavior manual can be an effective tool in allowing students to redeem themselves. I would suggest the following uses and expectations for staff when using this portion of the manual:

- When a staff member sees or hears a behavioral violation, an apology needs to be asked for. While we can't ask a student to apologize to us for something done to another individual, we can instruct a child to apologize to another.
- Along with lunch or after school detentions, a review of the behavior manual and apology letter should be mandatory for students during these times.
- Proper modeling of what an apology is and how to accept one should be done whenever an appropriate occasion presents itself.

Redemption and Making Wrong Actions Right

Regardless of the disciplinary structure in place, students should also be allowed the opportunity to correct their misbehaviors whenever possible by attempting to undue their actions when possible. This would be an extension of the apology process, whereby the party that committed the offending act would also be responsible for either the replacement of broken/ruined items, or the cleaning up of messes. Examples would include the following:

- Replacing broken or never returned pencils, paper, etc. from other students.
- Cleaning up lunchroom or classroom messes made, such as thrown food, spills, writing on desks or other littering.
- Taking part in cleaning any vandalism, graffiti or other malicious mischief.

While punishments are going to go beyond the cleaning, the expectation of Mercer should be that students will take responsibility for rectifying their misbehaviors.

Working off Detentions/Choices

Under some disciplinary systems, students who accumulate demerits or infraction points can earn off a given number of the demerits by doing community service deeds within the school. While Our discipline system is not currently structured in that manner, the idea of allowing students an option of how they are going to spend their one or two hours during detention has merit and benefits. Foremost, it will allow the student to have a small role in the determination of the consequences of his/her behavior. Within this choice then, students may be able to more deeply consider their behavioral choices, and feel as if they are working towards cleaning their record, or behavioral slate. Some other benefits from adopting this policy are as follows:

- Students can have an opportunity to learn more about community service while serving their detention/punishment.
- A wide array of options exist for what constitutes community service, such as litter detail, cleaning the school grounds in general, weeding/gardening, tutoring other students, office or clerical assistance, helping to repair broken furniture/desks, cleaning in the cafeteria or other areas where help is needed.
- Opportunities exist for connections with service learning projects and working with community members.
- The development of the concept of social justice. While some misdeeds may allow for direct compensation or atonement to the offended individual, others may be viewed as a crime or violation against the school community in general.

Therefore, apologies must be made in a more community service manner.

Rewards

The argument over intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation and rewards is an ongoing debate that was found in a significant portion of the research I gathered. While I tend to side on wanting to push for developing as much intrinsic motivation to do right as possible, I realize that students at the middle school level do often need external reminders and rewards/opportunities to work towards. Under our old system of Honor Level, student would regularly receive treats or small rewards for being on the first or second level, which meant they had earned few, if any infraction points. In another model I worked with at a previous school, a monthly form was sent around with the names of the students on it, and a teacher would either check off “yea” or “nay” depending on the students overall behavior. If the student had either all “yea’s” or only one negative check, then they would be allowed to participate in a school wide activity, such as going to a movie, having an ice cream social or attending a special field trip.

One possible method that would allow for periodic rewards for those students who are complying with the expectations outlined in the behavior manual would be to have students take around a “behavioral progress report” form to each class on a given day, and much like the yea/nay system, have each teacher initial and check off a box for the student’s eligibility for a given event. The forms could be coordinated by either a grade level team leader or any other teacher, and a list then made of all eligible students. The activities would need to be determined in advance, and when made known, could be written into the behavior manual to serve as both a reminder and goal. Some months have been omitted due to existing vacations and testing schedules.

Example of Monthly Mustang Recognition Form

Monthly Mustang Recognition Eligibility		
Name _____		
Teachers: Circle either yes or no and initial.		
Period 1	YES	NO _____
Period 2	YES	NO _____
Period 3	YES	NO _____
Period 4	YES	NO _____
Period 5	YES	NO _____
Period 6	YES	NO _____
Students: If you disagree with an evaluation, please arrange to meet with your teacher at a mutually convenient time in order to discuss your behavior.		

Pride Cards

Currently, Mercer has a positive incentive system in which students who are seen engaging in positive social behaviors or helpful actions are given a pride card. The pride card is signed by a teacher and the student. Students may then accumulate them and enter their cards into weekly drawings for small prizes (cans of soda, school supplies), or hoard them until the end of the year, when we have a pride card auction. Several larger prizes (toys, sports equipment, art supplies, video games) are purchased, and students can bid on their prize of choice. Whomever bids the largest amount of cards wins that particular prize. I suggest expanding this practice in three ways:

- Have all teachers commit to using and distributing pride cards on a daily basis. Currently many teachers do, while others only give them out when they think about it, or not at all.
- Have the weekly drawings and end of year auction continue, but also implement a semester or quarter auction on a smaller scale. This would reward those students who are working hard to do what is right on a more short term scale, and also serve to remind them to keep their behavioral focus on track for the long term.
- Have some of the prizes for the quarter/semester/end of year auction on display throughout the year, so students can have a tangible reminder of the benefits of behaving positively.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this project was to develop a behavior management manual to be used at Asa Mercer Middle School by students, teachers, administration, and support staff. The manual was meant to implement the teaching of and defining of appropriate behaviors expected at school. Through the process of extensive review of related literature and other pertinent documents, a concise behavior management manual was developed. The behavior manual took into consideration both existing rules and former disciplinary structures at Asa Mercer, while also looking at the disciplinary and behavioral policies at other middle schools in and out of the Seattle School District. While not serving to replace the existing discipline policy, there were many instances where the behavior manual could be used as an integral part in the disciplinary process. The behavior manual guide will serve as a tool to establish behavioral norms for the students from the beginning of the year, and will be constantly referred to as needed by staff and students. The ideas for utilization are meant to establish a framework for implementing behavioral curriculum into the daily routines of class, giving teachers suggestions for how to use the tool.

Conclusions

As a result of this study, the following conclusions have been made:

1. The implementation of a behavior management program takes support from the entire school community. Students, parents and staff must all have buy-in and support for the plan in order to make it work effectively.

2. Appropriate student behavior is not something all students enter our school with, and therefore it needs to be modeled, taught and reinforced on a consistent basis. This includes appropriate behavior, comments to other students and teachers when facing positive and negative consequences, apologizing and outside of school expectations. This can be thought of as behavioral curriculum.
3. Behavioral policies, manuals and codes will not be utilized or read if they are too long, outdated, or contain expectations that are vague or irrelevant to the current school population and climate.
4. Students need and want firm and consistent behavioral expectations. We therefore must balance treating each child individually, while allowing them the security from knowing that everyone will be treated in a fair, similar manner.
5. Every teacher needs to adopt the same behavioral expectations and consequences for all students in order to create a teaching environment that treats all students with consistency.
6. Behavioral plans need to be open for discussion and reworking on a regularly scheduled basis, not just when there is a crisis or need. Furthermore, the discussions need to include representatives from all parts of the school community, including students. Without this discussion, a plan will eventually fail.
7. The opportunity for students to learn about positive and negative consequences needs to be built into the behavioral plan in order for the plan to be relevant.

8. Whenever opportunities avail themselves for teaching appropriate behavior, they should be taken and considered teachable moments.
9. The time spent on teaching appropriate behavior during the beginning portions of the year will allow for more time to be available for teaching subject matter curriculum throughout the rest of the year.
10. The inconsistencies in the application of consequences for inappropriate behavior can lead to increases in disciplinary problems. This is due both to student confusion about what the consequences are, and student frustration over the unfair application of consequences.
11. Staff training will be required in order to allow every teacher to become familiar with the behavior manual and to know how to apply it.

Recommendations

1. A uniform, school-wide approach must be taken in order to effectively teach and manage behavior.
2. The behavior plan must be reviewed on a regular basis by an established committee that includes students, staff and parents.
3. All teachers and administrators at Asa Mercer must agree to use the behavior management manual when working with students who are not behaving appropriately.
4. All students and teachers must have a copy of the manual that is easily accessible in order to reference it when needed.
5. Regular opportunities for using the manual should be scheduled into the routines of all classes.

6. Opportunities for recognizing and rewarding appropriate behavior, such as the pride card auctions or reward activities need to be continued and increased.
7. Students need to be held accountable to a high standard of behavior which is modeled regularly by staff.
8. Students should be given regular opportunities to reflect on behavior and to practice and model appropriate behavior. Additionally, students should be given opportunities to practice appropriate responses to negative behavior.
9. Parent surveys should be conducted on an annual basis in order to determine methods for improving the plan.
10. If Mercer adopts a new discipline system, the behavior management manual should be able to work in harmony with it, while further necessitating the need to continually revise and review the manual.

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Exploring Discipline Issues
Especially Disrespectful Behavior
12/1/04

1. In what ways is the current system working for you and your students? Which students? Why?

- In general, my classroom system works for nearly all the students. The rules are clear and easy to follow. The few students who have had trouble are showing improvement, which indicates to me that the system is working. Using the buddy teacher within the team has worked so far.
- Administrators normally are very prompt about responding when called in on a situation.
- Pride cards all students – rewards good behavior – praise of work when trying – posting work where all may see it.
- The current system is fairly unstructured, so a teacher can do any number of strategies to handle problem behaviors. This makes it ok for me to take the easy route which is to send the kid to the Asst. Principal to take care of it.
- Tardy policy is working – detentions are being assigned very quickly.
- It's not.
- The current discipline system works well for students who don't need much of an external discipline system.
- Class meetings have helped deal with issues and discuss reasons why certain behaviors are wrong. Overall, my students behave better this year, so I do think that it is working, for the most part, for me. Students are more motivated by positive reinforcers.
- Most of my students exhibit respectful behavior toward their peers and me. These students figured out that things go much more smoothly when they are focused on their schoolwork and own success instead of busying themselves with gossip and off-task behavior. These students have set achievement goals for themselves whether it is small *getting a positive comment on a daily progress report) or long term. They look forward to participating in extracurricular activities. Follow-up by counselors has been helpful.
- When dealing with disrespectful behavior in the current system, I have found success in firstly, identifying the behavior as disrespectful to the student and, depending on the severity of the behavior, do one of three things or a combination of them: 1) warn the student that direct consequences will result in further behavior of this nature; 2) have students verbally apologize for the behavior publicly or privately; 3) have the student compose a written apology in which he acknowledges his wrongful behavior.
- students evaluate (self-monitor) own behaviors
- students are aware of expectations/boundaries
- students feel comfortable to step out of their comfort zone
- rewards/recognition for good behaviors
- It's working for those students who need only a gentle reminder to change any unwanted behavior. This year that's all but 3 students in each block. A disapproving look, calling names, will do it. Sending students to Mr. Rosen and Ms. Toth is addressing the others, by removing the behavior from the classroom.
- less punitive
- The "buddy teacher" system helps because students are separated from the class where they are being reinforced for negative behavior by peers attention (and possibly, peer behavior of a similar nature).
- The "Reflections" paper helps because it requires the student, in their own handwriting, to reflect on their behavior, its effects on others, and what should be a consequence to deter that type of behavior in the future.

- The Peer Mediation or Mediation approach works because it requires both parties to share their feelings, to be respected, and to give as well as take, in order to establish a resolution of the problem.
- When students who are sent to me & the teacher has treated them respectfully, giving them options, it helps that the teacher has or will call home to give the parent first hand information and it helps when I know the classroom expectations and rituals to support student behavior.
- I have students write reflections when they misbehave (disrespect my classroom rules). Usually this makes an impact on them to change their behavior. If it doesn't, I send them to see the counselor or administrator. Usually this works fine.
- The current system is working for my students and me at the classroom level in so far as I am allowed a good degree of latitude to deal with respect issues on my own. I would say that almost all students would prefer discipline be handled by the teacher rather than an administrator.
- I feel I am able to handle discipline problems within the classroom. The buddy system is a tool that is also helpful. My biggest issue is with students calling out or having side conversations. I am able to deal with this on my own...so far, so good.
- I feel the discipline system is working in my classroom...
- I feel it is a great positive – being able to work with team members and discuss issues and have support.
- For the most part, “the system” seems okay. However, I’ve noticed there is not an immediate consequence for students – especially for disrespectful behavior.
- Pride cards – girls
- Meetings with counselor or administrator with groups of students who are having problems (all).
- Having administrators and counselors talk to the students about what we’re doing in class and rewarding them with pride cards – this makes them motivated to learn while in class.
- Less paperwork to track – infractions, detention slips, etc. Kids who are normally well behaved are not pushed into corners by the rigidity of infractions i.e., high performing students with minor behavior problems who blow up when given infractions.
- Allows more instruction time and freedom to implement my own draconian discipline system.
- My classroom understand my rules and are expected to follow them.
- All discipline problems are handled within my class.
- All my students follow the rules.
- Students that enter in my class at lunchtime also know my rules and expectations and must follow them or are asked to leave or serve a time out.
- Have my own system – pride cards, student of the month.
- Find it's more effective when the teacher deals with the discipline problem – it's more immediate, but I am able to do this because of the type of class I have.
- Students feel safe in my classroom.
- Students like to be in class.
- Students understand “foul language” is offensive to me – so monitor speech.
- Students are improving in loudness – slow progress.
- Consistent expectations.
- Daily student logs
- Mutual respect
- Understanding of exceptions (ill, no medicine, personal, family concerns).
- One on one counseling.
- After following a “step-wise” plan in my classroom, it is helpful to get students out of the class that make it to “step 4” in my class (the highest step you can get on i.e., the most trouble). Every

time I've sent someone out, it has been handled by office. This is the student that gets in trouble regardless of the discipline system.

- 99.9% of the time students are respectful towards me and other staff members (true across grade levels)
- Using phrase "are you a part of the problem or a part of the solution" helps to frame discussions about changing behavior.
- I would say the current system works for the students that want to be in class to learn something new and exciting. It also works for kids with one or two re-directions to get on track.
- I independently impose discipline – I hold my own detentions and promote accountability and responsible decision making in lessons and disburse with students.
- The majority of students are personally responsible for behavior.
- For the students I have in AVID, the current system seems to work fine.
- In after school we do have some issues with a few students but phone calls home have worked well so far.
- In the lunch room, I have some problems with the current system. Overall most of the students are behaving positively but when there is a problem, I sometimes struggle.
- Works well for well behaved students that are trained by their parents and are stable.
- In class discipline – what I have to deal with on my own – is working. Non-habitual students. They realize they made a mistake and will change their behavior once I've talked to them. These students are generally respectful and have supportive families.
- Referrals to me work – I handle them ASAP – work with students, call parents, dish out consequences.
- Involving parents and grandparents is key to working with students and affecting change in behavior of students.
- Working together as adm., counselor and teacher is ESSENTIAL in working with families and students (need more work in this area).
- The current system is working for all my students for whom I can deal with in my classroom. The few students who continue to disrespect usually have bigger issues they are dealing with and find a way to get them selves in bigger trouble at another point in the day. I feel support by the administration yet have a system that runs with out it (for the most part).
- I really feel like it is working for me. I spent quite a lot of time talking about respect, how we learn, why we do not learn in a hostile environment. they make mistakes but they respect the system we have in the classroom.
- I have few problems with discipline. I do not follow the school system outside of serious misbehavior/referral to vice principal). My system works for most of my kids. I can only think of about two that it doesn't work for. I use personalized talks, isolation, and loss of lunch time useful, behavior reminders and incentives.
- It is working for major behavior problems. There is a very concrete system in place to deal with major troublemakers. Anyone who is in violation of exceptional misconduct as outlined in the agenda book has a very clear consequence.
- Grades & no referrals for basketball games. Although, once they have served, I think they should be cleared to go.
- I generally deal with things myself, taking a tough love, deal with it house approach; so I don't need infractions, etc. Most kids are fine anyway. Biggest issues are relatively mild.
- I am giving out many more pride cards this year to reward positive participation, and while I don't always like extrinsic motivators, the reality is that they often work.
- Threatening to call home (classroom)
- Works for most of my disrespectful students (classroom)

- Removing students from classroom, using buddy teacher and sending out on referral (if really crossed line)
- Push ups (always give choices).
- Good students care about the consequences. Discipline problems do not apply to most of my kids.
- One student with whom I have a lot of difficulty with has started to listen better, but not well enough yet. I am constantly getting my 6th graders together and getting them to set up ground rules to make it go more smoothly.

2. In what ways is it not working? For which students? Why not?

- The ways that aren't working are mainly hallway behaviors. I hear kids using putdowns, cussing, threatening. These are behaviors that concern me, particularly dealing with students I do not know. For a small group of students, the hallways are perceived as a "no rules" zone.
- 7th Grade hall is a consistent problem before/after school and between classes. Obnoxious behavior, "whooping", bantering and crowding in the hallways needs to stop.
- Students are rude, pushing and impolite in the hall (7th and 8th mostly).
- Overall, I haven't had to rely on the current system in regards to disrespect. I've noticed that in the hallways there are some students that do not follow instructions such as to walk or lower their voices. They lack respect for teachers they are unfamiliar with.
- Student is ODD – doesn't want to work/student is hyper – very impulsive and constantly verbal/student is noncompliant.
- The current unstructured system also applies to the admin. Because I keep getting the kid back with no consequences or results from their behavior.
- Truancies, tardies, referrals – no feedback; minimal consequences (if any) for disruptive (and disrespectful) students.
- Skipping for any student – what is the consequence? Not fast enough – having to go through a counselor first – when I send a student to the office, it is for a reason and a consequence is needed nor merely a conversation or a forced apology.
- It is not effective for students who do not self-discipline. Those students take away lots of time from the other willing learners. Students who are disrespectful continue to be disrespectful. The system of referrals and paper trails is antiquated and a hassle. Disrespect is normalized.
- I have had a few students skip my lunch detention that they were given for not coming to class prepared or not getting class work completed due to off – task behavior. These are the students who are not as motivated to be successful. Calls home have not been effective with 2 of my students whose parents are not reinforcing positive behavior.
- The handful of students who were not affected by honor level are doing less and less in the classroom because they do not feel the consequences matter much. Current system for these students allows them too much time out of class.
- The system does not work for students who are apathetic to consequences or who dwell on the moral divide.
- 7th grade hall is a consistent problem before/after school and between classes.
- name calling
- deviance (argumentative), though allowed to voice opinion at 2:15
- more than 3, 2, 1 re-directions is needed
- not doing their work
- not following instruction
- talking out of turn
- we talk about the same 15 students at every meeting

- Removing a student who is disrupting teaching allows me to teach again; however, the repeat offenders are missing instruction time. I have one student who believes I just pick on him; no or little headway has taken place.
- There are no set boundaries for behavior now (subjective).
- Students that had behavioral from previous years, are yet having the same issues.
- Consequences are not consistent.
- Students who either blame or avoid others do not participate in finding solutions for their problems.
- When teachers do not have clear expectations or rituals set up, class or lesson is disorganized working is not scaffolded.
- African American students sent out more frequently than others.
- I have had one student that I had to consistently write reflections and had to send out. Nothing seems to have impacted his constant rude behavior. I was glad when my time with this class ended. I think we need a more "student-centered" policy, where the students know what behaviors are acceptable and what the consequences are.
- For a very few students, the current system has been ineffective in that it is too permissive. Most teachers in this building have pretty good class room management skills, so when a student is sent on to a counselor/administrator for discipline it is, most likely, because the student has chosen to disrupt the educational environment.
- Referral systems seems not immediate enough. Too much time spent on "paper trails" not enough on consequences for behavior. Too much "wiggle" room for repeat offenders.
- I don't really feel like I understand the system or "accepted procedures" – i.e. when to write referrals, when to just talk with students myself.
- Tardies: Perhaps a call from the attendance office or admin would carry more weight (only a few students).
- Suspensions: Kids come back with worse behavior. In-school suspension would be great!
- No tardy policy – chronically tardy students have no consequences, becomes a habit.
- Counselor referrals have no long term meaning – serious referrals do not then have a progressive paper trail.
- No list of students who have served detention – this doesn't allow me to praise students for accepting their consequences and goading non-compliant students for continued disrespect of the system.
- I don't have a Buddy Room!!
- It's not not working for me.
- Discipline interventions not clear.
- Students do no use class time effectively.
- Incremental steps nor available – zero referral.
- Sped students in academic enrichment period 6
- Class sizes too BIG.
- Students "copy" work of others.
- Students want "fill-in-the-blank" activities; coping mechanism for low skills.
- Communication about consequences to me non-existent almost (like students who sleep) – feedback please!
- Time factor – unable to drop teaching to deal with concern.
- Lack of parent response.
- Delayed handling of serious outbursts by administrators, counselors, and staff.
- Lack of resources

- Roadblocks by assistant
- Little things like tardies, gum/candy in class, not turning homework in, "small" chatter is a little more difficult to catch or discipline in the referral system.
- I have seen a huge improvement in students respecting each other this year (compared to previous two years), however, students do still put each other down.
- Also, cussing/swearing seems to be a problem.
- Students lacking the social and emotional skills to manage behaviors do not respond to "lunch detentions" and re-direction of negative behaviors. These students do not respond to rewards either. Students need an alternative environment that supports the student personally and academically.
- When supervising the lunchroom, it is difficult to address the student(s) that being disrespectful – often there is more than one student acting out and I cannot always get everyone's attention or name to be sure that my discipline is being administered fairly and accurately. Last year I could make "honor level system" threats and get some respect.
- The students who have no consequences at home – who are either spoiled or in a very difficult, damaging, and unstable environment.
- The referral system (repeat offenders) for tardies, getting into each other's business, bullying, harassing each other – these behaviors don't change. The students continue their behaviors after a few days of being their best.
- Serious issues are NOT handled in an immediate manner by administrators. Bullies get away with too much!
- "Bad" behavior has been normalized here. I have witnessed students use profanity and deficient behavior toward an administrator with little to no consequences. i.e. "Shut up".
- There are students who left other schools and came to Mercer after the start of the year. These students usually have more difficulty fitting into the classroom culture.
- It is not working for the students who constantly disrupts the learning environment each day but do not warrant being sent to the office. It doesn't work because the classroom interventions for some students are not severe enough. That said, an office referral/suspension is not much more effective. Some students are not affected by punishment or positive reinforcement.
- I miss the positive rewards – the honor system. What is not working is the kids that are always in trouble – they don't care & positive rewards have also not worked for them. How do we capture these kids?
- I would rather see an in-house suspension than at home. Kids are just running around at home – what is the consequence here?
- A few. Just like every year. 1 or 2 kids per class that won't be quiet, are always disruptive. I honestly don't know if punitive or rewards will help them. Likely the same kids who would be getting infractions anyway.
- Hallway disrespect, loudness, boisterous behavior. There are a few kids who always cause commotion in the halls. There is not much we can do. Even if Imanishi is in the hall, they pass him by and go on being disruptive.
- I agree that a uniform consistent consequence based system sounds nice but perhaps within the class we can do it ourselves. However, one of the attractive items for me coming to Mercer was the school wide uniform Honor Level System.
- The current system is not working well for my students. Teachers can have several classroom expectations and consequences for violating these expectations. The problem has been not knowing or having something in place that would be more severe than the consequences that have been ineffective for certain students. Most problems lack parent support or very little parent involvement, even after home visits and phone calls.

- The reason for this repeated behavior is that these students really don't believe that something will happen to them for acting out.
- Hall behavior – large groups, school rules not enforced by some (lots of cussing & running)
- Tardies
- Having teacher discounted by administrator in front of the student.
- It's not working. Things just getting filed away. Then days later you might hear about the problem. It seems to be the same students every time. Kick him/her out but don't work on the disrespect problem.
- I believe people just not doing there job. Most of the Special Ed students seem to get away with everything.
- The troublemakers don't care; the consequences don't have any affect on them.
- Saturday School/suspension doesn't mean anything for the disrespectful students. No homework, no supplies; doesn't listen, interrupt class; doesn't do anything in class since Sept.; hallway issues (gossiping, touching fighting...). Don't know why!
- What discipline system. It's all on us.
- For 7th grade it is not working for any students.
- Not working – when a student is not assigned even as much a 1 lunch detention until a month after the referral, there is no connection between the behavior and the consequence.
- Referrals returned 1 month after being written (ex. 3 tardies on 10/22 returned after Thanksgiving)
- Kids are being unsafe with equipment
- Tardies/non-suits/bringing materials to class/talking back
- Taking points from grade – not effective.
- Rules – not effective b/c not possible to monitor constantly. The kids know they are not following rules, but if they are not caught, they think it is okay.
- More time spent on in class discipline results in less time spent on lessons/activities.
- I do not feel well informed/linked to/supported by an overall discipline system. The discipline issues I face involving disrespectfulness are mostly in the form of back-talk and disagreement during lunchtime sports. I have students who repeatedly disrespect other students and me and I do not know what to do with them. I do not want to kick them out of football but it is a bad example for them to be able to get away with what they do. Can I send them to the office? If so, what will happen?

3. Additional ideas generated during group discussion.

- If a student has been sent out of class, we should be respected as professionals in that we have used every available classroom management strategy, before determining that the student's behavior is disruptive to the educational process.
- How can respectful behavior be modeled and taught school-wide? How can it be rewarded?
- How to make the discipline system more effective?
- Students seem to know when a system is not fully in place.
- Detain students for lunch (personal)
- Lack of feedback by administrator
- Proactive discipline in classroom effects administrative action. Something working. Not seeing 320 students.
- Strict atmosphere with specific details.
- Immediate consequences
- Changing some behaviors must begin at home.

- Catch student interest, interact with them.
- Honor level program with some tweaking could have been streamlined.
- Discipline system is not working – there is no follow through. Students chewing gum – repeat offenders. Safety is of concern.
- System works when you don't have a huge number of kids. Discourse happens and then after 15 minutes – behavior continues. Cycle repeats. Students need to be removed from the room – students need to have a room to work. (ISS)
- 45 minutes to teach – attendance in computer – students coming in late – students bothering each other – disrespectful language. Class time is short. I don't want to yell anymore. Not a disciplinarian.
- As a result of more time spent on classroom discipline, there is less time available for lessons/activities. We're losing teaching time.
- As much as adm. say suspensions don't change behavior, that may be true for a few students but for most students it does matter if they are suspended or not. Most kids want to be at school – they can't socialize when they are not here. Suspensions work and show other kids (victims) that violence will not be tolerated here.
- Student makes parent calls – become an example of misbehavior for the class - very effective.
- Hallway behavior is a big concern – language
- Social skills is as important at this age as curriculum – skill first
- We don't think this is a system, because a system works together.
- In-House Suspension with consistent instructor.
- Hallway behavior; disrespectful of others and rules (bad language)
- Working/good:
 - systems in place in classroom
 - know rules
 - scaffolding has been in place
 - work in classroom but when students need more there is no help.
 - still use infractions
 - busy teacher system
 - reflection paper
 - peer mediation – require give and take
 - internal structures
 - a lot of things working buddy system works at 6th grade
 - working smooth
 - less paperwork, not stopping class to write an infraction
 - current system less punitive than honor level system
 - token economy system
 - class meetings
 - pride cards
 - grouping
 - Mid-year pride card auction
 - Big discipline problems
 - Respect has increased over last 3 years
 - Kids in general respect teachers
 - classroom mtgs.; money game (token-economy system)
 - kids doing well are still doing well; pride cards daily use this year
 - not too much bad language because it is not allowed (respect)
 - students like being in their class

- rewards & recognition for good behavior i.e. pride cards; self-monitoring sheets
- awareness of expectations & boundaries; feel comfortable in class
- 30 pride cards give – cards taken away for behavior; student of the month
- handle discipline problems in own class
- keep expectations high – grades & referrals for basketball games
- Not working/bad:
 - students who blame others
 - when not relationship with teacher when there is no scaffolding
 - truancy
 - tardies
 - not getting referrals back
 - feedback and communication is not strong – need to know what happens with referrals.
 - not fast enough
 - hallway behavior – nothing we can do
 - hallways during passing periods
 - 8th grad no tardy policy
 - counseling referrals not counted in the progressive discipline system
 - hallways
 - repeat offenders
 - kids not working
 - suspensions
 - lots of referrals
 - little things (gum, tardies, chatter)
 - hallway behavior
 - swearing
 - hall-way behavior
 - kids not working
 - suspensions

4. What do you want or need to help your students behave appropriately so maximum learning and growth can occur? (focus on disrespectful behavior)

“Regular” students who *occasionally* show disrespectful behavior

Classroom Level

- Want suggestions for how to set up consistent, reasonable, effective ground rules
- Discipline repeat offenders more harshly so that the “good kids” don’t accept that behavior as “ok”.
- Refer to class rules
- Talk to them outside of class
- No problem
- Consequences fit the misbehavior
- Lunch detention/parent conference/after school detention
- Not much – continue time out partners
- Handle in classroom
- More consistency when correcting behavior
- Standardized warning system/color-coded flags, 1st warning, 2nd warning, 3rd warning.
- No supplies/talking out

- Classroom rules/clear, posted, consequences
- They need to show up for detention with me after school or have somewhere to go so the others can learn.
- Positive incentive ideas
- Student conference focus; responsible decision making – emphasis on empowering students to make good choices.
- Strategies that work in the little problems (i.e., chatting, tardies)
- More mentors/tutors for low-skill students, period 4 & 5.
- Literacy class too big and too varied in levels
- Take care of in classroom by using time out
- That respect is highly valued.
- Classroom sanctions as determined by teacher.
- Knowledge of the consequences and expecting a consequence.
- Clear classroom expectations/pride cards
- I need time to be in the classrooms more. It is extremely beneficial to see the kids in their classes. While checking planners or helping them with their work, I build positive relationships with students and teachers, as well as making assessments of students' learning needs and challenges. It also enables me to teach respect and to resolve problems of classroom behavior.
- Immediate consequences/have a place of isolation in each classroom.
- More rewards
- Consequences/call home
- Generally, these students respond to a private conversation or redirection.
- I can re-direct them on my own – no need for help.
- Loss of break time for student – dock down of student.
- Better incentives

Team Level

- Buddy system
- TOT – teacher time out to other rooms
- Team teachers should not have to deal with my problem students. Not fair to them. We should skip the team level part of discipline and refer students directly to the building level.
- Some kind of reward (as good as wild waves, skating party) for students to work toward.
- Continuing discussion at team meetings as we do now.
- Maybe strategies on how others have dealt with similar problems.
- I would like to hear what others do. "Reflection sheets" don't work due to language abilities. I need more ideas.
- Consistent grade level consequences.
- Buddy system
- Consistency – communication from administrators.
- Buddy teachers think sheets – share
- I need to have an understanding with the Team about how to manage all the walk-ins to my office. This includes teachers and parents, as well as students sent from class for misbehavior. How can I respond immediately to a counseling referral if I have several others to be seen at the same time? And how do I provide positive and proactive support for all of the other 8th graders who need recognition and support in order to maintain their high level of academic and social performance, such as Peer mediators, for example (other programming for students is also part of my job such as conferences, referrals, and activities (awards, etc)
- More rewards

- Support teacher/staff for student to talk to when needed.
- Time outs.
- More positive incentives for properly behaving students.

Building Level

- Support for the system and come up with suggestions.
- Quick & easy, consistency on rule breakers. Stop the behaviors before they explode into other forms of misbehavior.
- Counselor/parent conference
- Administrator/Saturday School/suspension
- More specific rewards for specific types of behavior.
- Cooling off area – preferably not outside on a cold, rainy day.
- A time-out to cool down and a listening ear.
- School uniforms
- More parental involvement
- Parent meeting required.
- Intervene only when behavior goes from occasional to chronic and begins to seriously interfere with the learning environment.
- Consistency
- School-wide campaign on respect.
- I need ideas for working with students who come to my office for misbehavior in class, or for problems with peers...who actually enjoy being in my office; and who like being listened to and reminded of how to resolve problems. What can I do to get them to do this on their own effort?
- More rewards
- Send the kid home if they don't feel like being in class and constructive. They don't need to be here.
- Consistency – communication/feedback – consequences.

Students with recurring patterns of *frequent or serious* disrespectful behavior

Classroom Level

- Want suggestions for how to set up consistent, reasonable, effective ground rules and how to enforce them.
- Take my word that steps have been taken to resolve these problems. Don't ask for more of my time on this kid. I'm trying to teach the others.
- Class rules/reminder/call home/refer to Room 125/talking to each other.
- After usual consequence – have parent/student conference
- Removal, which is being done with time out rooms, and which is working to eliminate the disruption. However, it doesn't change behavior.
- Buddy these students with another teacher
- Seahawk kids need help.
- Isolation
- Never come prepared to class
- Removal from room for 3-5 days in another room or suspended
- They need to show up for detention with me after school or have somewhere to go so the others can learn.

- Recognize that students in poverty lack socially and emotional skills. They need resources and support on developing skills to manage behaviors and build trust. Also, academic support. ISS would need to provide support.
- More "hands on"
- Classes: shop, cooking, crafts, sewing.
- Please honor many middle school students that are kinesthetic learners.
- A buddy room
- Area for time out away from students that want to learn. I do not mean another teacher's room – but somewhere there is no other students.
- One or two warnings, then they're sent outside.
- Letter home detailing misbehavior
- Loss of break
- A consistent, classroom to classroom list of expectations so these students know what is expected and know what will happen.
- A behavior contract
- Progress discipline alternative placement for serious students.
- Cameras in the classroom – students do not know when they are turned on.
- I don't know – many of these students are already involved in a group or private counseling situation. They have learned what to do but are unable or unwilling to apply the skills.
- Call home – detention by me.
- Serious logical consequences that discourage potential followers.
- Removal from classroom.

Team Level

- Parent/student conference with time spent in another teacher's room.
- A way to compile data/statistics on # of interventions so admin can see the true amount of disruption and find alternative placement.
- Team leaders to call home, set up conferences.
- Share ideas with team members
- Communicate better with previous grade level staff to see what worked or didn't.
- Seahawk kids need help.
- Buddy teacher
- Working with frequent offenders in finding strategies that work with other teachers.
- Removal from room for 3-5 days in another room or suspended
- Team teachers should not have to deal with my problem students. Not fair to them. We should skip the team level part of discipline and refer students directly to the building level.
- Can't do more, team leaders have large classes too!
- Buddy teachers
- An easy to manage non-time consuming detention system.
- Team/parent meeting if student has been suspended for something serious.

Building Level

- I want a clear explanation of how I can deal with difficult kids. At what point can I send kids to the office, etc. What will happen to them?
- Teach them true consequences.
- Behavior plans that are followed thru and known to all.
- Do not return to class until consequence is paid.

- MLT – Please take action, less talk more action.
- Respect as a professional
Administrators do not need to be “friends” with the students.
- 1st – Administrative conference with student, parent and teacher before student can return to school.
- Discuss next consequence if behavior occurs again.
- Quicker consequences (even two days is too long to wait or handle a situation).
- Seahawk kids need help.
- In-house suspension
- Clear follow-thru.
- How to support students in productive respectful behavior.
- Required parent conference
- Suspension 1-3 days, 3-5 days, 7-10 days, long-term and expulsion
- No violent acts by students allowed.
- In school suspension where students can do work – away from friends – students are silent.
- Referrals are written only after many steps have been taken with the students. Trust the classroom teacher.
- ISS – with strict structure.
- A menu provided to all teachers (maybe gathered via ourselves) of various in class interventions, i.e. specific breakdown on various approaches.
- ISS – daily
- Supervised lunch detention
- Letters of concern sent home via administrator, counselor
- Mandatory in class/during class observations by parent or guardian
- Professional assistance from medical field; physician, psychiatrist psychologist, etc.
- Follow-up skipping/more support/feedback/place to send/in-house suspension
- In-school suspension.
- Identify these students before schedules are made and make sure no more than 3 are in any one class.
- Tardy policy
- In-school suspension with a consistent teacher. Kids do work all day.
- At what point is it acceptable to send kids out? We need somewhere to send them or the whole class gets lost.
- Some sort of program set in place before behaviors become unmanageable.
- Be honest in determining when student has crossed the line of acceptable behavior and give serious consequences and follow up immediately.
- An in-house suspension room.
- Skills groups/family counseling/behavior modification plans.
- In-house suspension with a teacher to supervise on a rotating basis during their prep time or hire 1 FTE; optional – use counseling staff on a rotating basis.
- If the students are not afraid of their parent, they don't care about suspension. What can we really do? But they are hurting our classes (90% of our good kids) they should matter a little.
- In-school suspension room with daily regular teacher.
- Behavior modification (social skills) program in school; after school; Saturday School. (How can we run it – can we outreach to community?)
- Consistent practice of disciplining students in the hallway.

- More immediate consequences such as after school detention which then show these students that repercussion comes close on the heels of misbehavior.
- In-house suspension. It seems way too hard to get all teachers together for meetings with student/parent.
- Consistent fair consequences – feedback to me on what was done.
- If sent to admin, I wish it would be addressed seriously and immediate.
- I am very concerned with those students who have “E”s and continue to pass.
- Serious logical consequences that discourage potential followers.
- Not really sure if this would work – Create team-wide behavior contracts for the 5% of students who are chronic misbehaviors.
- Re-entry program for kids who have been suspended (behavior often doesn’t change when they return).
- Consistency – communication/feedback – consequences.
- Require parent/guardians to attend classes with offending students.
- Send to another behavior training school.