

EAD 610

Task 2.2.2: Student Management Platform Statement

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I believe that effective management of student behavior is a critical element of school leadership. Promoting and maintaining a safe and orderly environment is a key to creating a healthy school culture. In order to learn effectively students need to feel safe. They need to feel safe both physically and emotionally. Students also have to some sense of order and predictability. If schools are not successful in establishing safety and order, students, and their learning, will suffer.

So how can schools establish safe and orderly environments that lay a strong foundation upon which teaching and learning can take place? Like most other activities in schools, managing student behavior should center on student learning. I believe that schools need to be proactive rather than reactive in their approach to managing student behavior. Schools need to teach students what it means to behave in a positive manner. Students need to learn the various types of appropriate behavior that will be expected of them throughout the school day. For example, appropriate behavior will look much different on the playground, where running is permitted and frequently encouraged, than it will in the classroom. At the same time some expectations for behavior are universal and need to be followed everywhere at all times. For example, students and staff members should treat others with kindness and respect, take responsibility for their actions and work cooperatively with others.

I believe that effective student management takes a school-wide effort. All members of the school community need to work together to establish and communicate high expectations for student behavior. Schools need to focus their efforts on recognizing and reinforcing positive behaviors. This emphasis and recognition will help in the development of a school culture that values, reinforces and perpetuates positive

behaviors. Character education is one strategy that schools can use to help students learn and adopt habits of positive behavior. Schools can implement character education through both school-wide and classroom activities. School-wide activities provide students with a sense of unity and togetherness while classroom instruction provides additional practice and helps students to generalize and apply what they have learned.

While schools need to work in a proactive manner with the entire student body to communicate expectations and recognize achievement, they also need to establish clear and logical procedures for intervening with students on an individual basis when they do not meet these expectations. Administrators and other staff members should be firm, fair, caring and consistent in applying discipline. The intent of discipline should always be student learning and growth. Disciplinary procedures should help students to reflect on their actions and learn to identify alternative courses of action and make better decisions in the future when faced with similar circumstances. Schools should not seek to rigidly control students' actions but should instead strive to help students monitor their own behavior and develop greater self control.

I believe that schools can and should establish norms of continuous improvement. In order to do this, schools and their leaders need to be reflective in their practice and continually assess their progress. In regards to student management, schools should solicit feedback from staff and students and collect and analyze a variety of data. Through this process of collecting and analyzing data schools can identify areas of concern and develop plans of action for making improvements. For example a school may find that an inordinate number of discipline referrals stem from incidents that happen in the lunchroom. After the problem is identified the school can then decide upon

an intervention strategy such as increasing the staffing in the cafeteria or providing students with choices of activities to do after they have finished eating. Once a strategy has been implemented the school must then continue to collect and analyze data to evaluate the effectiveness of the changes. By establishing this as an ongoing process a school can maintain a focus on continuous improvement.

I believe that open communication with parents is a critical aspect of student management. Parents should be kept informed of how their children are doing in school. This is just as true in regards to behavioral and discipline concerns as it is to academics. By maintaining open, ongoing communication schools can work in partnership with parents to help their children achieve their full potential.

I believe that another key to improving student management is creating a culture in which students and staff get to know and respect each other on a personal level. It is essential that students view their teachers as *caring*. I believe that the saying, “You have to reach them, before you can teach them.” rings true, and that schools need to establish a *culture of caring* in which students and staff know that those around them have their best interest at heart.

In conclusion I believe that the single most powerful tool a school has at its disposal for managing student behavior is its instructional program. Schools need to make every effort to ensure that their instructional programs meet students’ learning needs and that extracurricular activities provide students with opportunities for additional growth and development. When students are interested and engaged in their learning student management issues are rarely a concern.