

Dealing Positively with Pupil Management

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Introduction

A recent analysis of teachers' primary tasks identifies "managing and influencing student behavior" as the most important function teachers perform (Benderson, 1985, 8). I doubt that this finding surprises anyone in this audience anymore than it could have the almost 2,000 teachers and administrators who participated in the study.

Controlling and influencing student behavior seems to be a persistent topic on fall teachers conference programs. In our classrooms it is a task which at times may seem as frustrating and unending as the perennial struggle to rid our lawns of crab grass. And evidence seems to mount with the arrival of each month's periodicals that the task is getting more difficult.

Marie Winn is among those who argue that "family instability, a new and less protective stance toward children, and a culture increasingly dominated by television" have spawned a generation of students with "lower tolerance for delayed gratification" and who are "more self-assertive, uninhibited, and less respectful of adults than children of the past." On behalf of America's teachers she groans: "Now, in order to succeed, teachers must "motivate" more than was previously necessary and hold attention by being entertaining—not an easy task" (Winn, 1985, 16 and 20).

Perhaps the program committee had similar thoughts when this paper was assigned. The instructions elaborating on the title asked the essayist to consider exploring "motivation as a management tool." What I find refreshing, however, is that the committee, contrary to Winn and her ilk, has asked for a positive emphasis in dealing with pupil management. Such emphasis is the only one worthy of Christian educators no matter how depressed the surrounding cultural conditions might make us (cf. Ps. 10; 13; 37; 73).

In a general way, positive pupil management is commonly defined as "the processes and provisions that are necessary to create and maintain environments in which teaching and learning can occur" (Duke and Meckel, 1984, 3). For many, Lortie has succinctly captured the essence of this task:

The teacher... is expected to elicit work from students. Students in all subjects and activities must engage in directed activities which are believed to produce learning. Their behavior, in short, should be purposeful, normatively controlled, and steady; concerns with discipline and control, in fact, largely revolve around the need to get work done by immature, changeful, and divergent persons who are confined in a small space (1975, 151).

We as Lutheran teachers, however, have concerns that deal with more than merely getting work done. I believe therefore that dealing positively with pupil management is affected by our understanding the context of Christian education and is enhanced by using to advantage conventional wisdom and pedagogical research. This paper however will concern itself only with understanding the context of Christian education. We shall look at the purpose of education in this context, life in this context, and implications of this context for dealing positively with pupil management.

Understanding the Context of Christian Education

The Christian teacher has good reason to be concerned about dealing positively with pupil management. The teacher and the children in her care by their very nature make the Christian school or classroom unique. This uniqueness is expressed very well in the centennial history of our synod. The writer on parish education concludes his essay:

The Christian parent is happy to know that his child enjoys a true prayerful communion with God in the Christian day school. There, and there alone, the Lord is present with His good gifts and Spirit, for there

our sons and daughters are gathered together in His name. Day by day our heavenly Father gives them His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace they believe His holy Word, and lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity. Every branch of learning in the Christian school is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. What other school can offer such a wealth of heavenly gifts to our children (Voss, 1951, 216)?

The important distinction in this description lies solely in the fact that these children and their teacher are called into a fellowship of saints. They are brought together by the power of the Word into a community of believers bound to Christ and in Him to one another in love (Rom. 12:5; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:5). In this fellowship of believers we have the circumstances, the context, in which Christian education takes place (Coiner, 1960).

The Purpose of Education in this Context

Before setting our focus on the most positive means of guiding and motivating students, let us get a clearer vision of Christian education within this context. This is the context within which Christian parents and congregations desire first and foremost to transmit the truths of Scripture to the next generation. They are mindful of the psalmist's exhortation, "One generation will commend your works to another; they will tell of your mighty acts" (Ps.145:4). Consequently, Bible history and the catechism claim first place in the instructional program of the Lutheran school and classroom.

Christian education, however, dare never be merely a narrow training in religious knowledge. As important as that knowledge is, we seek chiefly to influence the hearts of our children to have them live as Christians, little Christs whose wills are one with His. This purpose requires that we use God's Word and provide opportunities for children to exercise their faith, that we surround the child with Christian nurture, that we teach to the affective as well as the cognitive. We want our children to see how the Word illuminates all of life. To further sanctification in this way suggests that the school teach "all knowledge that belongs in a curriculum." At the same time attention is given to whatever is needed for "perfecting useful skills, cultivating cultural interests and social graces, promoting physical health, and developing the special gifts and talents of the individual child..." (Board..., 1959).

We strive to do these things in the conviction that our children are to be educated in every direction, for life on earth not less than for life in heaven; they are not only to be brought into communion with God by faith in Jesus, but they are also to be taught how to exhibit this faith by love of their fellow men; they are not only to receive the powers of a new life, but they are also to learn how to employ these powers rightly in the service of God and of their neighbor. It is God's will that the talents which He has given our children be developed for useful application. Therefore they must also be well trained in secular knowledge. A parochial school does not fulfill its mission unless, while developing Christian faith in its pupils, it also enables them to perform their everyday work in a Christian manner (Schaller, 1900, 20-21).

Where such circumstances exist, children will grow up to become in ever greater measure useful members of the Christian Church. Their motto will be "for me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21a) and their life's purpose "to thank and to praise, to serve and obey Him."

This context of Christian education includes more than specific activities directed by the teacher. The Christian teacher does well to recognize what this "more" is, for such awareness underscores the necessity for dealing positively with pupil management and the use of motivation.

Life in the Context of Christian Education

The Christian classroom because it is a gathering of Christians is a place in which the members nurture one another in mutual spiritual growth and edification (Col. 3:16). Luther in the Large Catechism speaks of this context of Christian nurture as he explains The Third Article.

[The Holy Spirit first leads us into his holy community, placing us upon the bosom of the church, where he preaches to us and brings us to Christ... Through [this community] he gathers us, using it to teach and preach the Word. By it he creates and increases sanctification, causing it daily to grow and become strong in the faith and in the fruits of the Spirit (Tappert, 1959, 415-417).

Christian children, by the grace of God, also have this power and the desire to nurture one another, to demonstrate their faith, and to participate in the communion of saints. They belong to one another because God has claimed them as His own in Baptism and the blood of Christ and has given them to Him and to their fellow believers. Although children are not as experienced as their teachers in Christian living, they are Christians. Even the young Christian learns quickly that membership in the body of Christ is not only a fellowship of privilege but also one of responsibility. Therefore, they too both receive and exchange the God-given power which is needed to maintain faith in God and the spiritual vitality which sustains the Christian life in all of them.

The Christian classroom, in which the Gospel rules, cannot help but be a place in which the child experiences, understands, and practices the realities of faith in personal and fellowship relationships. In this context Christian nurture is done by precept, teaching and speaking the Word of God. But in the classroom Christian nurture occurs also by example, which gives children real-life evidence of God at work in their classmates, and by the children's and teacher's personal experience of being Christians receiving from God the power to do Christian deeds (Coiner, 1960).

This fellowship is what makes the classroom a haven, a place of security, a fortress against all opposition. It's a safe place to live. For many children the safest they have. Here tears are dried, the burden of pain is lightened, and disappointment overcome. In this circle of concerned, caring fellow believers talents are cultivated, ideas are stimulated, values are shaped. Here the individual may grow in developing a unique personality and establishing personal relationships with God and neighbors.

Certainly, hurt and disappointment are also experienced. Just as in the Christian family not all is sweetness and light. Disagreements, corrections, and living with the consequences of faulty judgment and misbehavior occur. But care, concern, and love overshadow the ills that cloud human existence. Forgiveness carries the day. Even in the midst of trial and disappointment, a calm and peaceful joy prevails (Meyer, 1985, 285).

In this context, faith constrains the teacher and children to speak to one another what they have seen and heard. In this context the children and teacher enjoy the comfort and security of being a part of Christ's body. In this context they share in the exchange of correction, admonition, encouragement, and strengthening one another. In this context, as they grow in grace, they learn first-hand what it means to be free from all men, yet servant of all. What is happening here to teacher and children is a reflection of what Luther says in "The Freedom of a Christian"

Each one should do the works of his profession and station,... that by such works he may submit his will to that of others in the freedom of love... A Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and his neighbor. Otherwise he is not a Christian. He lives in Christ through faith, in his neighbor through love. By faith he is caught up beyond himself into God. By love he descends beneath himself into his neighbor; yet he always remains in God and in His love (Dillenberger, 1961, 78-80).

Much more than social intercourse is taking place in such a classroom. When Christian children, youth and teachers respond to one another in this way, their relationships are grounded in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. He makes possible the relatedness of persons so that fellowship is experienced, it is nurtured in them and developed and continued, and, as it continues, it grows. When one is brought into this fellowship of believers, he is loved, restored, forgiven, then he too has something to give away. He too finds himself in Christ

and in community with other believers. All this is done not because one must or is forced to do it, but rather because Christians, under the influence of God's Holy Spirit, simply live this way.

This then is our understanding of the context of Christian education in Lutheran schools and classrooms. It is a context in which persons are confronted, quickened, and transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and led into and nurtured within the communion of saints, which believes, lives, and proclaims the Gospel. As this happens the learner becomes a willing and active participant. This context contributes in making Christian education unique (Coiner, 1960). Obviously, this context has implications for the way we as teachers deal with pupil management and think about motivation.

Implications for Dealing Positively with Pupil Management

One might react that the school or classroom described above is unrealistic and more than slightly out of touch with reality. I hope neither is true. But should the description seem slightly overdrawn, perhaps you will grant at least that it is a vision worth striving for. That vision seems to me to fit well with what the Lutheran church teaches regarding the communion of saints. That vision also takes seriously Paul's words that pastors and teachers are given to the church "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." (Eph. 4:12).

Some might also suggest that the reality of sin is not accounted for in the context as described. I think it is and more will be said shortly. What I have attempted to do is set the stage for how motivation may best be used in a positive way in pupil management.

At this point you might be thinking that I will now endeavor to impress you by describing one or more of the management or motivation systems currently promoted by psychologists, sociologists, and others (Charles, 1981; Duke and Meckel, 1984). But you have access to their books. They deserve attention, but one can't really do them justice in an hour or without first establishing what you yourself believe life in a classroom is or should be.

What I think can be most beneficial for dealing positively with pupil management places me into the predicament of the Australian chief. He dearly wanted a new boomerang, but he just couldn't throw the old one away. Yes, we have some time-honored principles that deserve reviewing and renewing. Principles that, when pursued, emphasize what today is viewed as preventive management (Brophy and Putnam, 1978).

Let us agree first that the implications for management of the context we desire for Christian education begin with that person whom the Lord has called to be the shepherd of the lambs and sheep who are fed in our classrooms. A description of that teacher is useful for our purpose. I believe one of the most thought-provoking, inclusive descriptions of the Christian teacher is that which Professor Hartwig gives in *The Evangel in Fulfillment*:

The good teacher draws easily from broad funds of knowledge. The good teacher packages that knowledge in skillful demonstration and attractive display. The good teacher labors at this high calling out of love for the learner. Without love, teaching becomes a stage on which the actor seeks applause. Without skill, teaching grows dull, and without knowledge its nourishment rapidly thins out (Hartwig, 1976, 36).

Love is the characteristic which deserves consideration at this time. As teachers we need both to recognize the source of that love and to return daily to the well from which we draw its nourishment. Christian teachers are therefore faithful, diligent students of the Word. In that Word we find God's great love for us in His Son which in turn moves us to love Him and His Word, and fills us with a desire to glorify God in all that we do. For us as teachers this includes growing in knowledge about what we are teaching and becoming ever more pedagogically skillful. This love also shows itself in love for our fellowman, in particular our students, whom God also redeemed through His Son (Schuetze, 1957). What motivates us as teachers deserves careful attention when as Christian teachers we consider motivation in dealing positively with pupil management.

This all encompassing love leads the Christian teacher to recognize the high position of trust, authority, and responsibility with which the Lord has entrusted her and for which she must accept accountability. This love will move her also to bring to her classroom the mature guidance and balance between structure and freedom needed to provide Christian students opportunities to live as a community of believers. [Incidentally, recent research appears to support the need for teachers to accept authority, responsibility, and accountability if the classroom is to be a learning community (Putnam, 1984).]

The love we have for our students causes us to be grimly mindful of the fact that they are indeed sinners. This awareness requires us without equivocation whenever necessary to use the Law in all its severity. Since the flesh is a constant menace, also for little Julie and David, they require to be shown their sin and reminded of the wrath of God on sin. At other times they need likewise to have their sinful desires curbed. (Danker, 1956, 611).

But faith-born, Gospel-nurtured love also keeps us mindful that the Law improperly or excessively used can have a devastating effect on these young Christians. Its misuse may lead to good behavior out of fear, desire for rewards, a sense of self-righteousness, or even the terrible misunderstanding that good behavior is the way one receives righteousness before God (Walther, 1928; Bryant, 1984, 10).

The use of the Law is never a means for motivating Christian living or good classroom management. Yet, owing to their lack of experience children need guidance especially in their behavior toward others. For this reason, Mary and Philip and their classmates will benefit greatly from your sharing with them the use of the Law as a guide. When you and they use the Law as a guide, all will learn this vital truth:

This [the third] use of God's Law is possible only with those who know they are sinners, who never expect to be anything but sinners, and who then can dare to live triumphantly because their love for God leads them to delight in the Law of God, even though they know they will indeed sin against that Law (Isch, n.d., 7).

The Christian teacher properly uses the Law as a guide (the third use) when she responds in accord with Scripture to the child's question: "Teacher, how can I show Johnny that I love him because God loves both of us and has forgiven us our wrongs?" (Krugler, 1977).

Because the Law is so effective in alerting the Christian to the perils of sin and as a guide for the child of God, we frequently are tempted to act as if this Law also produces the Christian life we desire to see in our students and classrooms. But the Holy Spirit does not promote the new life of love for God and neighbor by confronting the Christian with God's moral expectations. Neither do the fruits of the Spirit come by ethical prescriptions, legal specifications, management systems, or manipulative motivational schemes. God's Holy Spirit and His fruits come only through the Gospel. Therefore, if we want to use motivation to deal positively with pupil management and to make full use of the context of Christian education, we must proclaim the Gospel to our children, put it to work in our classroom, and trust the Spirit to bless our efforts.

This prescription is easily said but less easily done. Perhaps the most practical thing I can tell you on its use is that motivation is not something anyone can give or work in another person. This is a fact from both a theological or a psychological perspective. Nevertheless, both theologians and psychologists tell us that we can provide opportunities for motivation to occur (Schuetze, 1957; Wlodkowski, 1984, 14). Therefore, Christian teachers wanting to deal positively with pupil management will give primary consideration to that which is at root the only effective motivating power for every aspect of a God-pleasing life—the Gospel. The Gospel in Word and sacraments deserves to be the most pervasive influence in the Christian school. This requires that we explore how the Gospel will affect our objectives, our curriculum, and our methods in order that our classrooms may be a lively context for Christian education.

As planning is done and curriculum study is undertaken, objectives are formulated which we hope to pursue. In the light of the significance of the context of Christian education several objectives should present themselves. First, the teacher will have as a foremost objective for her classroom: to teach and live the Word in such a way that pupils will be led to understand, accept, and experience confidence in God's love for them as forgiven sinners. This objective presupposes the children will also learn that they are sinners who deserve the

full fury of God's wrath in hell. Our classrooms, however, should be a foretaste of what God so graciously has provided for us and not of what we deserve.

At this point I should like briefly to digress and present a few thoughts about the use of Baptism in relation to this objective. Some years ago Professor Armin Schuetze in a paper on "Motivation" encouraged the synod in the use of Baptism as a way of attaining Christian motivation. He asked the rhetorical question whether we perhaps think of our Baptism as a one-time thing and at the same time rob ourselves of its salutary purpose and spiritual blessing for our daily lives. He then went on to say

...how we rob ourselves of spiritual blessing if we thus forget about our Baptism. What a power it should be to instill in us a continued love to God and a growing desire to serve Him. We read in Galatians (2:26-27): "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." So the beneficial effects of Baptism continue with us, we put on Christ and continue to have Him on; we continue to be children of God, we who have put on Christ in Baptism. If I am at anytime led to doubt my sonship, I can turn back to my Baptism and say to my fearful heart: but you are a baptized child of God and there put on Christ. That holds good today and everyday in the sight of God (1957, 129).

How can we not strive to help children and young people experience this confidence. We and they are Christians. Baptism assures us of that fact. How can we not live together with them and nurture one another in the context of the classroom. We refer once more to Professor Schuetze's paper after he quotes Luther and Paul on the significance of Baptism.

...Yes, daily we should go back to Baptism for help in overcoming the Old Adam, in serving God in holiness of life. Luther concludes his discussion on Baptism in the Large Catechism in part as follows: "Thus it appears what a great and excellent thing Baptism is, which delivers us from the jaws of the devil and makes us God's own, suppresses and takes away sin, and then daily strengthens the new man..." For this reason, let every one esteem his Baptism as a daily dress in which he is to walk constantly, that he may ever be found in the faith and its fruits, that he suppress the old man and grow up in the new. For if we should be Christians, we must practice the work whereby we are Christians... If, therefore we have once in Baptism obtained forgiveness of sin, it will remain every day, as long as we live." So we must not neglect our Baptism, but continue to go to it for the continued blessings God there bestows upon us (1957, 129).

With such a powerful means of motivation available to us and our students, we should cherish the opportunity to teach and live the Word so that there will be continual growth for all in understanding, accepting, and confidently trusting God's love for sinners. Subsequent objectives are similarly affected.

Other objectives that our understanding of the context of Christian education suggests are these:

- That in the classroom everyone feel and express active concern for others of the household of faith.
- That in tangible ways everyone show God's love for sinners in their personal relationships.
- That everyone grow in their sense of responsibility, use of their talents, and active participation in the life of the communion of saints.
- That all acquire a richer understanding of the nature and mission of the church and ways in which they may be lively members in its life and work (Coiner, 1960, 378).

Perhaps other pertinent objectives may suggest themselves to you. These few though are realistic in that they agree with our understanding of the purposes and context of Christian education. They are realistic also in that the motivation of teacher and students to work on these objectives will come only through the Gospel. They are realistic too in that they imply to teachers what they must prepare (content, classroom, students) in order for

these objectives to take on life. They are realistic likewise in that they imply the learner is also responsible for what happens in the classroom and school. Finally, these objectives are realistic in that they are of significance in determining curriculum and methods to which we next turn our attention in dealing positively with pupil management.

The curriculum should provide the outline in which students find, in Christian faith, the answers to the problems of life. Certainly, as stated earlier, the core of the curriculum is the Word of God, but, if the influence of the Word is to be shown as fully as possible in the Christian school, then the curriculum must also include so-called secular subjects and reasonable opportunities for cultural, physical, and social activities. Through this curriculum carried out in the context of Christian education our children not only receive the powers of a new life, they also “learn how to employ these powers rightly in the service of God and their neighbor” (Schaller, 1900, 21).

You may be asking “What has this to do with motivation and dealing positively with pupil management.” In reply, I would emphasize that in the context of Christian education the curriculum embraces God’s revelation and creation and is approached by teacher and children as a fellowship of saints. The Gospel is at work in this Christian community as the participants learn through the curriculum to believe that they are accepted by God, are moved to accept one another in love, and to commit themselves to the activities of Christian life and communion such as worship, witness, service, and study. More than conventional wisdom tells us that when learning is valued and students are helped to enjoy the actual processes of learning, recognize and appreciate their advances in knowledge and skill, and take pride in their skill and labor, motivation is at work (Brophy, 1983). Under these circumstances teachers have less need to be entertaining and can concentrate more on the essence of teaching and educating.

One of those essential elements to which a teacher gives attention is her teaching methods. Inappropriate, meaningless, or boring lessons and assignments can squelch interest, impede progress and cause learners to dislike a subject or school completely. The context of Christian education in order to be a nurturing context presupposes and encourages mutual formulation of ideas and values based on well taught Christian precepts. The teacher, by virtue of her call, is to be a model for living in the context of Christian education. In addition, well structured lessons balanced with freedom to converse and discuss will encourage students to affirm, to present evidence, to speak truths and pray in their own words, to express understanding and to apply to their lives the Christian precepts which they study. Such communication implies responsible, mutual sharing. The astute Christian teacher seeks also from secular writers and the volumes of research to enhance and enlarge her skills. She also takes from psychologists, sociologists, and others the ideas which she can fit wisely into the context of Christian education. Then, even when learning is not pleasurable or exciting, it will be worthwhile and free from anxiety or fear of failure.

Aware that sharing is part of living as a member of the body of Christ, the teacher will go beyond conversation and discussion to training students in helping one another academically as well as physically and socially. Thus, peer and cross-age tutoring appear to fit nicely into making the most of the nurturing context of Christian education. Let these examples suffice to show that also by her methods the Christian teacher will enable the baptized child of God to learn and live in the body of Christ, not to himself but rather in love, to the glory of his Savior-God and welfare of his neighbor. Where methods serve that purpose, the Christian teacher will find her concerns for motivation and the need for dealing positively with pupil management in large part satisfied.

A Concluding Word

The possibility exists that what I have said about “dealing positively with pupil management” and “motivation as a management tool” has not fulfilled your expectations. I know that I have not uncovered all that the program committee suggested might be treated under this topic. I have presented what I have, however, to offer all of us a timely reminder and a word of encouragement.

The reminder seems self-evident. We live in a day when education and educators are offered a wide choice of management systems and motivational schemes. They deserve careful study or at least our awareness

if not some acceptance and application of selected ideas and methods. The reminder is that we already have in our possession the most effective means of motivation and tool for pupil management ever available to teachers—the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Whatever we do with any other means of motivation or management, let us remember that to use them wisely we must bring them under subjection to the Gospel, or the results will be disastrous for Christian education and those who should benefit from it.

The encouragement is warranted because being a Christian these days is not easy and being a Christian teacher is more difficult still. But you can already find some encouragement in the fact that this has always been true. God made that clear in the Second Commandment. Taking His name upon us—calling ourselves Christians—is no light, half-hearted matter. It is a demanding challenge, for if we assume the name we must live it fully.

To teach fellow Christians requires dedication, commitment, and a willingness to travel many second miles, but it is neither an impossible nor thankless challenge. Our encouragement is that we have the privilege to turn again and again to the Gospel and from it draw the assurance and comfort that He who has called us to minister for Him will also give us the motivation, wisdom, and strength to serve Him faithfully and will until that great day when we hear Him say: “Well done, you have been a good and faithful servant.”

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Some Problems Frequently Occurring in Transitions

<u>Transition Point</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Comments/Suggestions</u>
1. Beginning the period	After the bell rings, the teacher stays in the hall talking to a tardy student. Other students talk and play around in the class. When the teacher enters the room, it takes a minute to settle the class.	A <i>Beginning Routine</i> is needed. The teacher should be in the room when the bell rings.
2. From roll check to checking the previous day's assignment	The teacher tells students to get out their assignment sheet and exchange papers in the usual way. While papers are being exchanged, the teacher has to look for the assignment book. Several students keep their own papers. Three students get up to sharpen pencils, delaying the start of checking by a minute. When the teacher begins calling out answers, several students call out that they don't have any paper to check, and another 30 seconds elapse before checking begins.	Although the teacher apparently has a routine for exchanging papers, s/he fails to monitor the process. Also, students are allowed to delay the start of the activity. The teacher should be ready when the transition begins and watch to see that it is carried out appropriately. Students should not be allowed to interrupt the transition, and the teacher should begin the next activity promptly. Students who are slow to respond should be prompted to hurry, or the next activity may be started with out them.
3. From checking to content development	After the papers have been returned and discussed, the teacher calls for them to be turned in. S/he tells students to get ready for the day's lesson on page 78 of the text. Several students call out, asking, "What page?" Two students come up to show something on their papers to the teacher. Many students begin to talk. Three minutes elapse before the next activity begins.	If the page number for the day's lesson were written on the board, then students would not have to have it repeated. The teacher needs a procedure (e.g., students can write a note on the top of the paper) to handle student concerns about assignments. Students should not be allowed to "come up" to the teacher's desk during transitions because this causes delays and keeps the teacher from watching the class. Student talking during a transition is hard to prevent when the transition is long and the teacher's attention is distracted. The talking makes it difficult to gain the students' attention for the next activity.

4. From content development to seatwork

At the end of a presentation, the teacher announces, "For your assignment, answer the questions at the bottom of page 80. You must write complete sentences. Get started now." The teacher then returns to his/her desk. About one-third of the class gets out paper to begin. The remainder talk, rest, or leave their seats to visit or to go to the teacher's desk. Several questions are asked about the length of answers to questions and when the assignment is due. Five minutes, only half of the class has begun to work.

It is important that students start assignments without delay. In the example, the teacher does not monitor carefully and so s/he does not realize how few students have actually begun. If the assignment were written on the board, instead of only given orally, fewer students would be delayed, and less talk would occur. The teacher should begin the seatwork as a whole class activity in order to get everyone on task. S/he could have all the students get out their paper and put on the correct heading. Going over one or more of the questions with the whole class would also allow for clarification of directions. Once everyone has begun, the teacher should circulate among them to encourage a good start and to prevent work avoidance or other delayed starts.

Procedures During Small Group Instruction

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Things to ask yourself</u>	<u>Comments</u>
A. Location of students	Does the location of the group allow for as much teacher eye contact with the remainder of the class and as few distractions as possible?	Decide whether to rearrange student seating according to group or, if you have space in your room to set up a group instruction area. Rearranging seats has the advantage of eliminating student movement when you change groups, i.e., <i>you</i> move from one group to the other, rather than the students leaving their desks to move to the group area. Also, you may be able to plan small group seating so that each group has proximity to a different board, screen or display area for assignments and to different storage areas (e.g., bookshelves) for materials.
B. Materials	What materials and supplies will be needed?	
C. Students movement into and out of the group	What procedures, rules, and teacher signals do you need to explain in this area?	If you have students move in and out of groups, you'll need explicit rules. Once out of their desks, some students will wander around the classroom.

D. Activities for students *not* in the group

What activities will the rest of the class members do that will *minimize their need for you* and yet will keep them as productively busy as possible? What should they do if they finish their assignments?

The seatwork assignments must be designed to require as little help from you as possible because you'll be working with other groups. Students wandering into your group activity to obtain your assistance will interrupt you and your group.

E. Expected behavior for students *not* in the group

What specifically do you expect concerning noise level? How and when can students get assistance from you during group activities? Whispers or silence? Will students be permitted to help each other when you are not available?

You should communicate your expectations and standards clearly to your class before you use group work, and, when necessary, at later times.

Helping Low Academic Level Students

Research shows that these things
will help

Low academic level students achieve basic skills

Time spent in structured learning activities led by the teacher

Instruction broken down into small steps, short activities sequenced by the teacher

Plenty of practice (repetition) with very frequent correction and praise

A lot of supervision and help, in whole class or group settings

Continuous teacher direction of student behavior and activity

Materials or questions at a level of difficulty at which students have a high rate of success

Many opportunities and much encouragement to answer teacher questions

Mostly narrow teacher questions with a "right" answer

Calling on non-volunteers or using patterned turns to select students to answer questions

Research shows that these things
will not help

Low academic level students achieve basic skills

Time spent in unstructured or free time

Long, unbroken periods of seatwork or independent work, with student choice of activities or sequences

Little practice OR Independent practice without prompt feedback

Individualized, self-paced instruction; independent work

Pupil freedom, situations calling for much pupil self control or self direction

Challenging materials or questions, or work in which students are not likely to know most of the answers

Few opportunities or little encouragement to answer questions frequently

Mostly open-ended questions
Non-academic conversation

Selecting volunteers only when calling on students to answer questions

Immediate feedback (as right or wrong) to students' answers

“Staying with” a student until he or she answers a question

Short and frequent, rather than long and occasional, paper and pencil activities

Specific praise for good performance

Covering material very thoroughly

A lot of time spent in teacher questioning, feedback, and supervised practice

Not giving clear feedback to students' answers

Quickly letting someone else answer: leaving a student with little or no feedback

Games, art work, a lot of interest centers

Vague or general praise or praise when it isn't especially deserved

Covering a lot of material quickly

A lot of class time spent in any thing else

Illustration of Clarity

Poor Clarity

Not telling students what they are expected to learn.

Using verbal mazes, that is, starting a sentence and stopping to start again pausing and repeating words to buy time, halting in mid-sentence.

Presenting information or directions out of sequence; starting and stopping in the middle of a lesson.

Moving from a major topic or skill to another without signaling the change.

Giving directions or procedures for an activity too quickly.

Inserting extraneous information into the lesson. Interrupting the lesson's flow with irrelevant comments or questions.

Presenting concepts without ample concrete examples; teaching skills without sufficient demonstration and practice time.

Being Clear

Stating lesson goals; listing major objectives on the board.

Presenting information in the appropriate sequence: emphasizing important points.

Working from an outline with complex content and providing it to the students visually (e.g., on a transparency or board) as well as orally.

Preparing students for transitions by giving them warning; telling students what to expect and why the activity has changed.

Giving step-by-step directions, making sure that everyone is following them.

Sticking to the topic; making certain that the main concept is understood before adding complexity; teaching basic skills to an overlearned (highly developed) level before presenting refinements.

Having many, varied examples; planning adequate demonstrations and practice time.

Using phrasing and vocabulary that is overly complex for the age/grade level.

Over-using negative adjectives and adverbs, such as “not all rocks,” “not many countries,” “not very happy”

Using ambiguous phrases and pronouns with vague or unidentifiable referents: these; them; things; etc.; and so forth; maybe; more or less; this thing; all of this; and so on; you know

Being vague and approximate about
amount—a bunch, a few, a couple, some;
likelihood—may, might, chances are, could be, probably, sometimes;
nature—aspects, sorts, kinds.

Using words that the students understand repeating and restating major points and key ideas: checking frequently to see that students are with you.

Being specific and direct: “the igneous rocks,” “one-fourth of the countries,” “upset” or “annoyed.”

Referring to the concrete object whenever possible; using the noun along with the pronoun: these bacteria; this sum; those problems; all of the spelling words on page 20.

Being as precise as possible. Specific information is more interesting and easier to remember than vague facts.

Common Characteristics of Schools with Good Discipline

- Characteristic 1: These schools did many things that have been done by good schools and good educators for a long time.
- Characteristic 2: These schools have fostered good discipline by creating a total school environment that is conducive to good discipline rather than adopting isolated practices to deal with discipline problems.
- Characteristic 3: Most of the educators viewed their school as a place where staff and students come to work and to experience the success of doing something well.
- Characteristic 4.: These schools are student-oriented.
- Characteristic 5: These schools focused on causes of discipline problems rather than symptoms.
- Characteristic 6: Programs in these schools emphasized positive behaviors and used preventive measures rather than punitive actions to improve discipline.
- Characteristic 7: These schools adapted practices to meet their own identified needs and to reflect their own styles of operation.
- Characteristic 8: The principal plays a key role in making these schools what they are.
- Characteristic 9: The programs in these schools often result, either through happy coincidence or through deliberate design, from the teamwork of a capable principal and some other staff member who has the personal leadership qualities that complement those of the principal.
- Characteristic 10: The staffs of these schools believe in their school and in what its students can do; and they expend unusual amounts of energy to make that belief come true.
- Characteristic 11: Teachers in these schools handle all or most of the routine discipline problems themselves.
- Characteristic 12: The majority of these schools have developed stronger-than-average ties with parents and with community agencies.
- Characteristic 13: These schools were open to critical review and evaluation from a wide variety of school and community sources.

Summary

The picture shows schools with closer-than-average ties to home and community, doing things advocated by education theorists for many years. They attempt to identify causes for discipline problems and

respond by creating a total school environment to achieve worthwhile educational purposes. A strong principal with a dedicated and energetic staff share in making decisions on what is good for students. They stress high expectations and offer positive reinforcement for individual achievement. Staff and students seem self-confident and proud of the achievements in their school. They seem to be models of professional self-discipline.

Operating Assumptions for Developing a Learning Community

<u>Students</u>	<u>Learning</u>	<u>Curriculum</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enjoy learning. • are more likely to achieve if they participate in planning own outcomes and related activities. • will become responsible learners if given the opportunity and if held accountable. • will behave appropriately when taught how to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate behavior for a given setting. • have a responsibility to help other students learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is more apt to occur if students can relate present activities to previous concrete experience. • involves socialization (i.e., working with others, acceptance of diversity, heterogeneous interaction). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consists of integrating school learning experiences with real life applications. • incorporates integration of content so that transfer of learning occurs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is based on individual performance of group tasks. • must include elements of cooperation, participation by all, and meeting subject matter demands. • must occur at both formative and summative levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teaches. • holds a position of authority and responsibility. • speaks as an experienced and mature adult. • retains ultimate accountability and decision-making power. • solicits input. • seeks group consensus. • communicates rationales for decisions to students. • communicates decisions to students.

J. Putnam. "Developing an Elementary-School, Learning-Community Classroom," East Lansing, MI The Institute for Research on Teaching, 1984.

Student Rights

from William C. Rietschel. "Legal Issues and the Lutheran School." St. Louis, MO: Board for Parish Services, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, n.d., pp.3-4.

Within the managerial dimension of public school law, the most common source of lawsuit is the arena of student rights. Student rights and school rules and disciplinary procedures frequently conflict in public school law.

Much of the case law regarding the public school's managing or disciplining of students over the past 15 years has evolved because the courts have employed standards of constitutional restraint upon public school officials. Lutheran schools do not function under those same constitutional parameters because they are not considered to be agencies of the state. Consequently, constitutional rights such as "due process" or "freedom of expression" may not apply to Lutheran schools.

In fact, in *Bright v. Isenbarger* the court indicated six fundamental concepts related to constitutional rights that distinguish not only Lutheran schools but also all private schools from their public counterparts. They are:

1. Private schools perform a valuable social function by providing diversity that the government may not and should not provide in the public schools.
2. Because it is nongovernmental, private education is not restricted to the same nonpartisan and secular goals as is public education.
3. Private schools may provide religious instruction, propagate a sectarian viewpoint, and conduct religious services, which public schools may not.
4. Private schools may emphasize moral development and strict discipline in ways which public schools may not employ.
5. Private schools may discourage criticism and irreverence toward existing institutions or policies, which public schools may not.
6. Private schools may impose discipline in conformity of dress, speech and action... which public schools may not (Permuth, Mawdsley, and Daly, 1981,3).

Lest Lutheran educators become too smug in perusing this list, it is important to point out that the courts do not view Lutheran school students as having no rights at all.

For example, Lutheran school students could argue that constitutional rights are due to them because there exists an intrinsic involvement between the state and the Lutheran school. "State action," as this concept has been called, has yet to be employed against a Lutheran school as it relates to a student discipline situation. In fact, receipt of state/federal aid, state accreditation, issuance of a state charter, teacher certification, tax exempt status, submitting state forms and the fact that a private school is rendering a public function (e.g., education) have all been ruled not to be constituting a "state action" (Mawdsley and Permuth, 1983, 43-44).

Another example of an area that may activate certain legal rights for the Lutheran school student is when state or federal statutes are developed which might mandate Lutheran school compliance. Certainly, federal civil rights legislation as well as state health, safety, and certification requirements have impacted, and will continue to impact upon, Lutheran education. How individual state codes affect Lutheran schools need to be examined on a state-by-state basis, however.

Probably the most important single source of student "rights" stems from the contractual relationship "between the school and the parents or guardians of minor students or the school and students who have reached their legal age..." (Mawdsley and Permuth, 1983,48). As a result, all rules and regulations governing student behavior which are stated in application forms, brochures, catalogs and handbooks create both expressed and implied expectations for the student, the parent or guardian, and the Lutheran school. Generally, the student attends a Lutheran school with the expectation that compliance with its rules (both written and unwritten) and customs is required. The Lutheran school also is required to comply with its written requirements and

procedures. If, for example, the Lutheran school offers certain due process rights (e.g., notice and hearing) in its published materials, then it must grant them.

Ralph D. Mawdsley and Steven P. Permut, *Legal Problems of Religious and Private Schools* (Topeka, Kansas: National Organization on Legal Problems of Education, 1983), p.6.

Steven P. Permut, Ralph D. Mawdsley, and Joseph Daly, *The Law, the Student, and the Catholic School* (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1981), p.14.

Guidelines for Effective Praise

Effective Praise:

1. is delivered contingently
2. specifies the particulars of the accomplishment
3. shows spontaneity; variety, and other signs of credibility; suggests clear attention to the student's accomplishment
4. rewards attainment of specified performance criteria (which can include effort criteria)
5. provides information to students about their competence or the value of their accomplishments
6. orients students toward better appreciation of their own task-related behavior and thinking about problem solving
7. uses student's own prior accomplishments as the context for describing present accomplishments
8. is given in recognition of noteworthy effort or success at difficult (for this student) tasks
9. attributes success to effort and ability, implying that similar successes can be expected in the future
10. fosters endogenous attributions (students believe they expend effort on task because they enjoy it and/ or want to develop task-relevant skills)
11. focuses students' attention on their own task-relevant behavior

Ineffective Praise:

1. is delivered randomly or unsystematically
2. is restricted to global positive reactions
3. shows a bland uniformity that suggests a conditioned response made with minimal attention
4. rewards mere participation, without consideration of performance processes or outcome
5. provides no information at all or gives students information about their status
6. orients students toward comparing themselves with others and thinking about competing
7. uses the accomplishments of peers as the context for describing students' present accomplishments
8. is given without regard to the effort expended or the meaning of the accomplishment (for this student)
9. attributes success to ability alone or to external factors such as luck or (easy) task difficulty
10. fosters exogenous attributions (students believe they expend effort on the task for external reasons—to please the teacher, win a competition or reward, etc.)
11. focuses students' attention on the teacher as an external authority—authority figure who is manipulating them

12. fosters appreciation of, and desirable attributions about, task-relevant behavior after the process is completed

12. intrudes into the ongoing process, distracting attention from task-relevant behavior

From Jere E. Brophy, "Teacher Praise: A Functional Analysis." Review of Educational Research (Spring 1981): 5-32. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1981.