

Classroom PBIS for Online Learning

This document outlines ways that teachers may adapt Classroom PBIS strategies to fit an online learning format.

Introduction

Online learning can present some unique challenges and opportunities for supporting student behavior. Whether online learning is the regular format for delivery of instruction or emergency remote teaching is an alternate and temporary shift due to a crisis, the concepts of using PBIS in the classroom can still be used. No matter the venue of the classroom, the goal of increasing time spent on instruction by increasing positive, pro-social behaviors and decreasing behavioral challenges remains the same.

Identifying and Defining Expectations

If the school already has school-wide expectations, use those in defining expectations for online learning. Keep these simple, clear and concise. Adjustments from what was originally develop are to be expected, based on the needs of your students. Begin by defining some expectations for the general online classroom, but eventually there might be a need to create expectations for additional routines, such as a breakout room or entering the classroom.

Table 1. Example Elementary Matrix for Online Classroom

Expectations	Online Classroom
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use kind words• Take care of your needs
Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mute audio while teacher is instructing• Use the chat box when you have a question or comment
Responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be present and avoid multi-tasking• Participate as instructed

Table 2. Example Secondary Matrix for Online Classroom

Expectations	Online Classroom
Prepared	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Materials are ready• Join online on time• Complete pre-learning activity

Expectations	Online Classroom
Respectful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use school appropriate language with audio and in the chat box • Use chat box for questions and feedback
Demonstrate Effort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be present and avoid multi-tasking • Actively participate in whole group and break-out rooms

Teach and Monitor Expectations

If students are expected to demonstrate the defined behaviors, then teaching those behaviors is necessary. Teachers can describe, model, include examples and non-examples, and provide practice for students to demonstrate the behavior. Monitoring the behavior throughout the sessions will allow teachers to acknowledge expected behaviors and also respond to behavior errors with re-teaching or reminders.

Acknowledge and Encourage Behavior

The goal in a typical face-to-face classroom is to provide four positive interactions to every corrective interaction. There are several ways to deliver acknowledgements to students, which supports relationships between the teacher and student while also increasing the likelihood of positive behaviors from the students. Here are some strategies for teachers to increase positive interactions in an online format:

- Greet each student as they enter the virtual classroom by name
- Provide behavior specific praise during the session (i.e., “Wonderful job using the chat box when you had a question! This allowed me answer that when I was done explaining the concept” or “You demonstrated good effort on completing all of the pre-learning work when I know that you are helping care for a younger sibling as well”)
- Choose five students to individually acknowledge after each session, either in the virtual classroom or with an individual email. Rotate the students who receive acknowledgements. (McKale, 2020)

Respond to Behavior with Teaching/Re-teaching

Behavior errors will look different in an online setting as compared to the typical classroom. However, teaching and re-teaching the expectations remains an effective response to behavior. As well, since students may have not had to navigate a virtual classroom before, it is appropriate to simply remind the student of the expectations. Brief and direct response to behavior errors will support students in using the expected behavior more frequently. Be sure to acknowledge students when they do use the expected behavior after a behavior error.

Additional Strategies to Support Behavior

- Students thrive on consistency and predictability. Use a similar lesson format each session in order to allow students to focus on your instruction rather than putting cognitive energy into transitioning to unexpected activities or delivery methods. A simple lesson format such as the example below makes it easier for lesson planning as well:
 - 10 minutes - Introduction and expectations review
 - 15 minutes - Whole group instruction
 - 20 minutes - Break-out room
 - 10 minutes - Whole group share
 - 5 minutes - Wrap-up
- Use engagement strategies throughout the session to encourage on-task behavior. Students that are engaged in learning are more likely to demonstrate the expected behavior. Providing students with Opportunities to Respond is an easy and effective method for encouraging engagement. Here are some ideas for using Opportunities to Respond in the virtual classroom:
 - Ask students to respond to a multiple-choice question in the chat box
 - Have students make their own response card that they can hold up in front of their camera
 - Prepare a Google Survey to assess learning of a concept
 - Students can display a thumbs up or thumbs down
 - Polling on a question or reaction to a comment

References

McKale, T. (2020). The virtual classroom: Using CHAMPS for online learning [Webinar]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luSrENT6iZQ&feature=youtu.be>

Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (March, 2020). Creating a PBIS Behavior Teaching Matrix for Remote Instruction. University of Oregon. www.pbis.org

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