

Ideas to Implement the Comprehensive Model

Moral Discipline

The moral discipline within a school can generally be evaluated early in a visit to a school campus. Inappropriate student behavior in school halls, common areas or classrooms and the existence of graffiti, litter or vandalism all testify to a chaotic and low discipline environment and Ed Wynne, an early advocate for modern character education was known to observe that meaningful character development is not likely to occur in chaotic settings.

Moral discipline is a leadership issue. It requires the vision of the administration to consistently lead and the school faculty, staff and students to cooperate in support of a moral community. Moral discipline is observed when the school functions in such a way that students and teachers are able to pursue their work in a safe, respectful and caring environment.

The core principles for moral discipline involve:

- Establishing shared expectations that are supported by ethical values
- Clearly communicating school expectations and establishing procedures to support them
- Consistently and fairly enforcing violations of school rules
- Engaging students in reflection about rule violations with a focus on demonstrating positive character

There are many ways to codify expectations for groups to successfully work together. The US Constitution and our Bill of Right provide an example for expectations and procedures for an entire country. The Golden Rule (to be discussed in more detail in Ethical Decision Making) notes a universal expectation to “treat others the way you would like to be treated.”

The following worksheet focuses on the development of moral discipline through establishing school or classroom expectations, procedures and rules.

This worksheet is included within a workshop to create a class or school-wide moral discipline process. Participants identify a setting to be considered (hallway, lunchroom, classroom...) and proceed to establish expectations which clearly include positive character expectations. Procedures, rules and consequences are developed with an important distinction being drawn between the purpose and follow-up with procedures as opposed to rules. (Minimum time-90 minutes)

Setting (school-wide, lunchroom, hallway, restrooms, bus drop off, etc.)

Moral Discipline Team (teachers, administrators, staff, parents, students...)

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Current Status

Please note through observation, interview, survey, and school records the positive and negative behaviors that describe the current status of your selected setting.

Expectations

Brainstorm brief and clear statements for general behavior expectations. Expectation statements should articulate a high standard. Explicitly include the vocabulary of character goals your school has identified for its character initiative. Example-At Webster Middle's dining hall, everyone will demonstrate respect and courtesy to one another.

Procedures

Draft procedures that will help all members of your school reach their expectations. Procedures should be detailed, specific, and taught and practiced by students at the start of each year. If procedures are violated, students need to be reminded or provided more practice with referral to the goal of reaching the published expectation of the setting. Examples-a. We always walk in the dining hall, b. We keep a respectful space from each other, c. We greet each other with proper titles and names

Rules

Draft clear rules that if violated must have a sure consequence.

Examples-a. Objects will not be thrown in the dining hall, b. Vulgarity and/or put downs are unacceptable