

CASE STUDY



The Education Company
SCHOOL DISCIPLINE SOLUTIONS

*Solving school discipline problems
one intervention at a time*

Galion Teachers & Students Reap the Rewards of Clear Rules, Expectations & Consequences



Galion City Schools Galion Ohio

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District Profile

There are 4 public schools managed by Galion City School District serving 1,806 students in Galion, OH. Minority enrollment is 5% of the student body (majority Hispanic), which is less than the Ohio state average of 28%.

Elementary schools

- Galion Primary School
(Grades Pre-K through 2nd)
- Galion Intermediate School
(Grades 3rd through 5th)

Middle schools

- Galion Middle School
(Grades 6th through 8th)

High schools

- Galion High School
(Grades 9th through 13th)

Disruptive, distracting behavior was a given class-to-class and building-to-building at Galion City Schools.

Yet, the 96% attendance rates will also tell you that Galion administrators and teachers were actually getting it right a lot of the time. Evidently, Galion staff show students just how much they care and make learning an enjoyable experience, while also monitoring attendance, meeting with parents and doing home visits.

"Our attendance was above average but of course, what you do in class is as important as showing up, says Jim Grubbs, Superintendent, Galion City Schools, who also had issues with unruly behavior on its 12 school buses which carry close to 500 or 25% of its student population daily. The instigators' may act in isolation but their behavior has a ripple effect and touches everyone in the room."

Aware of Galion's history of reacting to situations rather than preventing them, the administrative team had been implementing a variety of discipline initiatives for years. Grubbs, who'd first encountered EDCO's assertiveness training system back in 2002, wanted to add it to Galion's toolkit as soon as possible. The EDCO training took place in 2015 and 2016 because as Grubbs learned from the EDCO founder Bert Simmons, if it's worth doing, it's worth doing whenever you start it. Notably, the EDCO Comprehensive Behavior Management System complemented and enhanced the other recently implement programs.

CHALLENGES:

- 1 - Unclear rules, expectations & consequences
- 2 - Inconsistent application of unclear rules, expectations & consequences
- 3 - In-class disruptions distract all students as well as the teacher
- 4 - Distractions reduce time and focus on teaching and learning
- 5 - Reactive versus proactive approach doesn't prevent or stop bad behavior

Solution:

Programs & Tools Implemented:

Teacher Training

Classroom Management That Works:
The Missing Ingredient Part I and Part II

Administrative Training

Administrative Strategies to Implement
Comprehensive Behavior Management Plan

Ongoing Monitoring

Ongoing Onsite Monitoring and
Coaching: Four Days a Year

Benefits/Results:

- 1 - Crystal clear rules, expectations & consequences that every teacher and student knows inside out
- 2 - Consistent application of clear rules, expectations & consequences to all students
- 3 - In-class disruptions are minimized
- 4 - Fewer distractions allow more time and focus for teachers to teach and students to learn
- 5 - Proactive, positive approach rewards good behavior and reduces bad behavior
- 6 - Bus driver write-ups drop by 50%

Clarity & Consistency - Crucial

"We lacked both clarity and consistency - teachers in each of our four buildings had their own rules, expectations and consequences which may or may not be relevant to a certain student on a given day", says Jennifer Allarding, director of teaching, learning and instruction, Galion. A behavior that might send a student to the principal's office on a Tuesday might not elicit a reaction Friday.

Incredibly simple, highly structured and overtly systematic, the EDCO's Comprehensive Behavior Management System teaches classroom management and communication strategies. Together, they effectively address Galion City Schools' inconsistent application of unclear rules, expectations and consequences.

"Skepticism is natural and I expected it because that's how I reacted when first introduced to the assertiveness training system 15 years ago", says Grubbs. "You really need to understand the Comprehensive Behavior Management System and see its results to believe in it because that's what it takes to get buy-in from the top down - your enthusiasm will be contagious."

Sway Skeptics with Detailed, Objective Explanations

A true passion for the Comprehensive Behavior Management System and its Proactive Assertion Elements will sway skeptics who already trust the leadership team. However, a detailed, objective explanation is the most effective way to sway those who may pre-judge assertiveness training. For example, potential users need to see that the system is inherently practical and based on a deep understanding of human and teenage psychology and behavior patterns.

"EDCO founder, Bert Simmons, really knows what matters to people and uses that to motivate and influence their behavior", says Grubbs. "Look at the Comprehensive Behavior Management System, apply its most basic principles to what's already around you, and you know it will work, even before you get to see it in action."

Focus As Much, or MORE on Positive Behavior

For instance, focusing on negative behavior is habit-forming as you notice and react to it. Students disrupt class to get attention and get a response. Engage in a war of words and you perpetuate the cycle. As you continue the verbal circle with lines such as "Shut up!" "Why are you arguing with me?" "Stop that right now!" "And sit down", frustration levels may increase and the situation may escalate. Know that since the student's ultimate goal is a reaction, the more the teacher reacts, the greater the likelihood the student will do it again. As Grubbs puts it, "Never wrestle with a kid. You get dirty and the kid likes it."

Teachers need to be both professional and strategic in their interactions with students. This requires the ongoing use of the Classroom Plan and its four components as well as the specific techniques taught by EDCO.

EDCO recommends this simple response: "Thank you for sharing. I understand." Repeat that one phrase as often as necessary. As Grubbs and Allerdig discovered, their students were surprised, even confused and eventually chose to cease and desist when the sheer predictability of the teachers' replies made it boring.

"This strategy works on 95% of our students," says Grubbs.



Clearly Communicate Non-Compliance Consequences

When not effective with the 5% EDCO notes that staff must communicate exactly what the consequences of non-compliance will be. After the initial warning, the teacher gives the student a discipline card, one of multiple tangible tools used to keep the rules and consequences top of their mind day to day. Students have actually told teachers that the discipline card is a visual reminder that helps them focus on their in-class behavior as does the opportunity to earn an ice cream sandwich. After the third challenge to the teacher, the student will be kept behind when class is dismissed.

"Hanging out with their friends is what they love more than anything so taking that privilege away, however briefly, is a real consequence to them," says Grubbs. "It's a low-key but effective deterrent."

While consistency and treating students equally is vital, teachers also need to interact with the students as individuals and deal with them one-on-one. If a teacher takes the time to really listen and talk to a student, the teacher demonstrates caring in a positive way. As mentioned earlier, recognizing and reacting to a behavior encourages students to repeat it, so watch for and acknowledge the positive behavior.

"Show a student that you care and they'll do anything for you," says Grubbs. "Keep in mind that if you constantly ignore the positive behavior, it will eventually disappear."

Students Respond to Tangible Recognition

Adds Allerding, who was looking forward to treating a student to a meal at McDonald's the next week, "Verbally acknowledge the positive behavior, but tangible recognition really gives them something to look forward to."

Of course, the training time required to learn EDCO assertiveness processes, which is typically a four to six hours over one to two days, may seem onerous to busy teachers and administrators. However, Grubbs notes that as we often say, "we need to spend money to make money" we also need to realize that "we must invest time to save time."

"Teachers may spend 10 minutes or more per class dealing with unruly students – imagine the cumulative impact of that 10 minutes over the course of teaching five days a week at 40 weeks per school year," says Grubbs. "Consider the time saved but also the positive impact on stress and energy levels when you're not dealing with that nonsense."

The last resort, asking students to leave class and visit the principal's office, is far too often the go-to management strategy at schools across the country. As EDCO trainers point out, it's the worst possible option as it tells students the principal is the one in control – not the teacher.

Finally, James Myers, transportation director, bus driver training, one of Galion's greatest Education Company skeptics, notes that thanks to his drivers' use of EDCO's assertiveness training system, they are better able to focus exclusively on the road

without students' behavioral distractions. As a result of the drivers' enforcement of the Education Company's clear and consistent expectations and consequences, the discipline write-ups have dropped by 50%.

The students that act out on the bus typically have issues in class as well. Monitor their behavior on the morning bus ride and chances are they'll be more manageable in class. As several principals and teachers have pointed out, bus drivers are the first to notice that a student had a rough morning at home, a bad day at school or issues with another student.

"I figured that training time was another wasted morning – but the results I've personally experienced prove it works if you use it correctly and consistently," says Myers.



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Educators learn how to create a safe, positive learning environment where students behave responsibly and take accountability for their conduct. They explore strategies to organize and manage the classroom with increased confidence and a calm sense of control. Through professional development, educators discover how to create a learning environment in which their students can excel, and in which they can go home feeling a sense of accomplishment.

This professional development is designed for K–12 teachers, special-subject teachers, administrators, counselors, resource teachers, and substitutes. Contact the Education Company for a Free Discipline Discussion.

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