# ALTERNATIVES TO SUSPENSION

Student suspension is a serious sanction that should only be considered when all other methods for managing student behaviour have been explored. Alternatives could include:

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| ***Preventative*** | ***Responsive*** |
| * Individual Behaviour Plans
* Referral to appropriate service providers
* Mediation
* Consultation with parents, students and support services
 | * Mediation or restorative justice practices
* In-school detention
* Time-in or time-out
* Service to the school community
* A temporary loss of privileges (e.g participation in extracurricular activities)
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| **Strategies to effectively manage classroom behaviour** | **Effective classroom management practices****Classroom management strategies are universal practices that are powerful in increasing student achievement (Kratochwill, 2014; Hattie, 2012). These practices help to build a sense of community and foster relationships between teachers and students and among students. Effective classroom management strategies help to prevent student misbehaviour and missed instructional time.**  |
| **Foster Positive Relationships in the Classroom Community (Hattie, 2012)**  | * Positive, empathetic teacher-student relationships are powerful moderators of classroom management
* Welcome students to class by name and encourage classmates to greet each other
* Call or send positive notes home to acknowledge positive behaviour
* Learn about students’ strengths and needs, interests, families and accomplishments outside school
* Build positive relationships among students by providing opportunities for group work
* Create the sense that the teacher and all students are working together to learn and grow
* Provide social and emotional learning opportunities for all staff and students
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| **Establish an Inclusive Classroom Environment (APA, 2008)**  | * Use and reinforce language that is respectful, gender neutral, and free of bias
* Learn about and honour cultures that are represented in your classroom
* Select curricular materials that reflect the cultures and life experiences of the students
* Have high expectations and provide high levels of support for all students
* Ensure instruction is matched to students’ skill levels
* Encourage and expect participation from all students
* Provide additional support to the students who need it
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| **Make Data-Based Decisions to Support Positive Behaviour**  | * Collect, maintain and monitor student behaviour data that includes both positive behaviour and instances of behavioural need
* Examine student behaviour data by:
* time of day
* time of year
* location
* type of task
* day of the week
* the students who are involved.
* Use data to identify positive classroom management strategies that effectively support classroom engagement, and strategies to address potential problems
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| **Teach, Review and Reinforce Clear Expectations** | **Teach, Review and Reinforce Clear Expectations (Newcomber, 2009)** * State classroom behaviour expectations positively (e.g. ‘raise your hand’)
* Establish and maintain consistent behaviour expectations and procedures
* Teach behaviour expectations in the context and location that they occur
* Remind students of expectations prior to the routine or context
* Monitor student behaviour and provide frequent and specific feedback
* Praise or reinforce students for following expectations
* Provide at least four positive comments for every directive or corrective comment
* Review procedures/expectations periodically and preventatively
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| **Optimise the Physical Space of the Classroom (Newcomber, 2009)**  | * Arrange furniture to allow easy traffic flow, make high traffic areas easily accessible and that seating and light arrangements are conducive to work
* Ensure that students are supervised in all areas
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| **Create Routines for Common Activities/Tasks (Newcomber, 2009)**  | * Working in groups versus independently
* Communicating with students and families
* Turning in homework, grading, and returning homework to students
* Getting permission to use the restroom, go to the nurse, etc and rules around getting and returning classroom materials
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| **Provide Engaging Instruction (Kratochwill, 2014; Newcomber, 2009)**  | * Establish clear learning goals and encourage higher-order thinking skills
* Vary the method (lecture, audio, and video) and response format (group versus individual)
* Vary response type (oral, written, active)
* Move around the room, scan the room and interact with students
* Positively and warmly acknowledge effort and participation
* Use media and technology
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| **Responding to Potential Problems (Newcomber, 2009)**  | * Identify the issue and act quickly and calmly, and maintain emotional objectivity
* Make simple, positively stated requests to help develop students’ self-control and self-regulation skills
* Acknowledge students who are engaging in appropriate behaviour
* Identify the function of the behaviour and any related skill deficits
* Develop a plan that addresses the function and skill deficits of the student
* Teach, model and reinforce skills or replacement behaviours
* Recognise the student’s positive attempts at changing behaviour and objectively follow school procedures for major behaviour problems
* Preserve students’ dignity, through encouragement, positive feedback which encourages students to participate rather than inhibiting their desire to try
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**References:**

* Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible Learning for Teachers: Maximizing impact on learning.* New York, New York: Routledge.
* Kratochwill, T. (2014). Classroom Management Teachers Modules. American Psychological Association. Retrieved from https://www.apa.org/education/k12/classroom-mgmt.aspx?item=1#
* Newcomber, L. (2009). Universal positive behavior support for the classroom. OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports *Newsletter Volume 4*, Issue 4. http://www.pbis.org/pbis\_newsletter/volume\_4/issue4.aspx.