# 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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |
| **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 |

**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.