

**Problems and Solutions to Reduce the Number of Classroom Interruptions and Increase Academic Learning Time**

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**I. P.A./Intercom:** Classes are interrupted numerous times each day due to the overuse of the intercom system. During one recent Monday morning class, the sixth grade team counted ten such interruptions. With each interruption, students' attention is pulled from the learning task, and the teacher must take valuable instructional time to refocus students. This is a loss of time we cannot afford.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Staff members are notified through the all call system they have a phone call.	A message can be taken and placed in the staff member's mailbox; in cases of extreme emergency, calls could be made into the individual's room.
A staff member is called to report to a particular location.	Any meeting should be scheduled in advance; if a teacher does not report, a call into that member's room or the room of his/her teammates would be appropriate. Calls for Mrs. Austin or Mr. Carter to report to the office should be handled through radio. Mrs. Washington could call Ms. Jones to radio administrators or she could receive her own radio.
Mrs. Washington sees students out of class on the video monitor and makes an all-call for them to report to her office. Sometimes this is repeated more than once, as the student(s) does not comply.	Teachers should report missing students to the office; the security guard and other free staff should escort wandering students back to class.
Students are called to report for field trips, basketball games, clubs and other meetings.	A list of participating students, the time students should be released from class, and the location they are to report to should be given to each affected staff member at least one day in advance. If a teacher forgets to release students, a messenger should be sent to that teacher's room, therefore eliminating the disruption to all other classes.
Students are called to the office.	My class is often interrupted because Mrs. Washington knows I know where all the kids are, and she can then call into that student's room. If students' schedules were on file in both offices,

	this practice could be eliminated.
Announcements are made several times a day at unpredictable times, including instructional time.	Announcements should be made at a set time each day, preferably during advisory or near the end of academic lab except in case of emergencies. This requires planning ahead; perhaps all announcements should be submitted on a form by the end of the day before the announcement will be made.
Announcements unrelated to students are made during the school day.	Announcements only relevant to teachers and other staff members should be made through memos placed in the mailbox or sent through email.

**II. Flyer/Memo Distribution:** Circulation of information is essential for students and staff members to function effectively. Timing of distribution of memos and flyers, however, is currently interfering with academic learning time.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>
A student is sent around with a last minute memo from the office; teachers must stop instruction to initial they have received the memo.	Memos should be distributed in the morning when teachers sign in if signatures are required. All other memos should be sent through email at least 24-hours before the information is needed.
Flyers for the kids are delivered to the classroom teacher at all times during the day. The teacher must stop instruction to listen to instructions regarding the flyer.	Flyers should be distributed at a set time each day, preferably during advisory or academic lab or placed in the teacher's mailbox with any pertinent instructions.

**III. Unscheduled Visits by Parents or Other Visitors:** Involving and communicating with parents is an essential task as we seek to improve student learning. However, unscheduled visits often interrupt the academic learning time of many students and keep the teacher from teaching.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>
A parent arrives during instruction time and wants an impromptu conference or conversation with the classroom teachers. The teacher is pulled from the room and students interpret this as down time. Academic learning time is lost.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parents should schedule conferences during designated team meeting times at least 24-hours in advance to give teachers time to prepare materials.</li> <li>2. If team meeting times are inconvenient for the parent, an alternate plan needs to be put into</li> </ol>

	<p>place:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Make a request for a phone conference at a convenient time;</li> <li>b. Communication through email or letter;</li> <li>c. In cases where a face-to-face meeting is necessary, an alternate time can be scheduled in advance so that coverage or arrangements to meet before or after school can be made.</li> </ol>
<p>A parent arrives and wishes to observe the teacher. Once there they want to talk to the teacher or chastise their child in front of the rest of the class. The teacher and students' focus is lost as the attention turns towards the parent.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parents should be informed that while they may observe the class, they should sit quietly while class is in session. Any questions should be held until class has adjourned.</li> <li>2. If a parent wishes to speak with their child about something they are doing wrong, the parent should remove the child from the classroom and speak to them in the hallway so as not to disturb other students.</li> </ol>

**IV. Student Tardies:** Keeping accurate student attendance is important. However, the current method of tracking tardies is not only inefficient and ineffective, it also adds one more interruption to academic learning time.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>
<p>Tardy students are instructed to report to the homeroom teacher, interrupting classroom instruction. Teachers then have to forward that information to the main office so an accurate count can be submitted.</p>	<p>Tardy students should report to their building's office and sent to their regular class. In the branch, Mrs. Washington can forward the updated information to Ms. Jones in one document, reducing the likelihood attendance will be incorrect.</p>

**V. Cafeteria:** Our students eat late almost every day. Many times when we arrive to pick them up, they have just gotten their lunch. It is not uncommon to lose 10-15 minutes of class time every day due to this problem. As the seventh grade arrives, students are forced to leave with lunch partially eaten, which creates resentment towards the teachers who are trying to follow the schedule and directions of Mr. Carter. Students who are angry are less able to concentrate on classroom instruction and more likely to act out decreasing academic learning time for both themselves and the other students in the classroom.