

It is extremely necessary to keep a **written** record of everything, both positive and negative. As you try to start fresh with each student daily, notes will refresh your memory. Documentation is important so facts can be preserved, and it helps to make sure you and your students understood and followed policy. Be sure to include any resolution or outcome from these exchanges.

Track and document what you do and what your students do. Transparency works for both you and students. Organized documentation also increases the likelihood that you’ll sustain the systems you create for more than a week. As a teacher you should document the following:

* Student conferences for each class.
* [Parent contacts](http://www.mca.k12.pa.us/elementary/images/PARENT%20CONTACT%20LOG.doc) for each class.
* Student discipline situations and support solutions.
* Student accomplishments, especially in the face of adversity.

Part of a behavior contract might include a daily behavioral log. Students would record their weekly goals, progress, reflections and self-assessments in the behavioral log.

Students’ behavioral logs become outlets to record behavior, habits and performance -- the good, the bad and the ugly -- rather than act out. They are part of discipline contracts and allow students to record kudos and accomplishments, mistakes and missteps. Recording what they did, both positive and negative, encourages ownership and accountability. One good guideline is insisting that students can write only from personal perspectives -- what they did and said, what they’re thinking and feeling -- and that they can’t blame others. They can say what’s upsetting them, what they don’t like and what they’d like you to do differently, however.

Each student’s log book is also the place where you jot down notes that add detail about specific incidents, provide specific feedback and encouragement, support each student’s efforts to change a behavior and congratulate each student on his or her success. Part of the follow-up with the log is setting a specified time for you and the student to review and look for positive changes.

Were the last six Teacher Tips on Classroom Management and Discipline useful?

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