

Reduction and Control of Classroom Interruptions and Guidelines for the Use of Instructional Time**Control and Reduction of Classroom Interruptions**

Regarding the control and reduction of classroom interruptions, the Superintendent shall require the school principal to:

1. Restrict the use of intercoms, telephone calls, office summonses and other non-instructional interruptions, such as fund-raisers, announcements, and notes to students, to a specific time during the day.
2. Provide written announcements to teachers whenever possible. Messages should be concisely stated in order to reduce the amount of time devoted to non-instructional interruptions.
3. Notify teachers in advance of all programs that take students away from regular classroom instruction.
4. Encourage visitors to make appointments for classroom visitations or teacher conferences thus avoiding unplanned classroom interruptions.
5. Schedule all maintenance and housekeeping activities, whenever possible, to before and after school hours.

Appropriate Uses of Instructional Time

Regarding appropriate uses of instructional time, the Superintendent shall require the instructional staff to follow the guidelines outlined herein for video usage, parties/celebration, rewards, and free time.

1. Videos during instructional time:
 - a. Videos are allowed which deal with events of important local, national, or world wide significance. They should be related to adopted curriculum and enhancement of classroom instruction.
 - b. The instructional use of all videos in the classroom should be preceded and followed by appropriate instructional connecting strategies.
 - c. Videos should not be used during instructional time purely for recreational, reward, or general purposes.
 - d. Instructional staff may utilize Tulare County Office of Education video services as well as video collections on site. Other taped videos shall have the proper approval of the site principal.
 - e. All taping and usage of videos by instructional staff shall comply with United States Copyright Law: United States Code, Title 17, and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works and/or as outlined in Copyright Policy and Guidelines for California School Districts, 1991.
2. Parties held during instructional time:
 - a. The definition of a party shall be the celebration of any event, personal or cultural, which is not part of the instructional program.
 - b. K-6 parties/celebrations should occur at the end of the instructional day and not exceed one-half hour in length. Classroom parties at any grade level should be limited to no more than three per year selected from the following events:
 - i. Halloween
 - ii. Winter Break
 - iii. Valentine's Day
 - iv. Spring Break
 - v. End-of-Year
 - c. Parties or celebrations for special events at the secondary (7-12) level should be limited to before or after school, during lunch time, and/or evening and weekend events (dances, etc.).

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3. Reward activities held during instructional time:
 - a. Appropriate classroom behavior should be expected as the norm, therefore, rewarding it with parties is inappropriate. If the instructional staff believes it is necessary to reward positive student behavior, then other, more academically enriching rewards, such as Student-of-the-Day, Student of the Week, etc., should be considered.
 - b. Ceremonies celebrating behavior should be limited to awards, not parties.
 - c. The graduation trip for 12th graders and the promotional trip for 8th graders during instructional time will be permitted, providing students meet academic performance, behavior/citizenship, and attendance requirements. At all other grade levels, End-of-the-Year picnics and field trips during instructional time shall be instructionally appropriate.
 - d. Activities rewarding academic excellence should have educational or cultural value. Instructional staff should strive to expose students to experiences of educational value that most students might not otherwise have participated, e.g., taking honor roll students to see a cultural event, such as a play, would be more educationally appropriate than an amusement park field trip.

4. Free time activities held during instructional time:
 - a. Undirected free time at any grade level has no instructional value and should not be allowed except during established recess or lunch breaks.
 - b. Directed free time is an appropriate activity only at the primary level where the curriculum encourages the development of social skills. However, free time may not replace instructional minutes in regular subjects such as physical education, mathematics, silent reading, etc.
 - c. If weather prohibits outside physical education instruction, indoor classroom activities shall be related to physical education and/or health instruction.

Legal References:

None