

Favoritism In Schools

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The definition of favoritism is “the practice of giving unfair preferential treatment to one person or group at the expense of another.” There is no harm in having favorite students in classes if, for example, specific students work very hard in that class or participate frequently, but the line crosses when students aren’t receiving equal opportunities or instruction, just because they aren’t the teacher’s pet.

According to *Smart Classroom Management* showing favoritism can create a division of the classes “where certain students are socially grouped and labeled as special or entitled or somehow better than others.” Students do simple things for a teacher like grading papers and it instantly makes them the favorite. Such favoritism risks a teacher’s reputation. *UCLA* states, “Trust between the teacher and these students declines, with obvious implications for relationship building.” Students put so much trust in their teachers and expect to get the same back, but in some cases that doesn’t happen. They get treated differently than others and that can make them trust that teacher less. *CNN* states favoritism is indicated by “boldness, mutual trust, and respect between students and teacher.” It’s less academic achievements and more the relationship between the students and teachers. Students could get an A in that class and work so hard but teachers don’t tend to base their favorites on that, as much as the bond they have with that student. When talking about grading, some teachers will be more lenient with some students giving them extensions and others not. This is not fair because it leaves students out and makes the classroom environment feel unfair. This feeling can leave the classroom and continue at home. If students don’t have a good home life, they rely heavily on teachers to be there and be someone to talk to, but if favoritism is present, they will be less likely to get that from them.

Some teachers use rubrics to grade so everyone is graded on the same thing and so students can then see what they got wrong. This is a successful way to prevent favoritism because everyone is graded with the same requirements and bias gets reduced. As cheesy as it sounds, one way to prevent this is to include everyone. It sounds easier than it is but there are ways to do this. Teachers like to do every student's least favorite thing and write down names on popsicle sticks and pick them. This is quite annoying, but it does reduce favoritism because everyone has an equal chance of being picked and called on. Another way is to just react the same for everyone; for example, if a student didn’t turn in an assignment on time and they decide to give them an extension, it would only be fair to offer that extension to everyone in the class. These ideas can create less favoritism and can lead to a better classroom environment for all, both teachers and students.

