

Both knowing about and being able to exhibit professional behavior with students, peers, supervisors, families and the community at large is a critical element of becoming an effective teacher. Create a list of guidelines/do's and don'ts for handling the following professional issues:

- *Continually disruptive students*
- *Angry/difficult parents*
- *A dispute with a coworker*
- *A disagreement with your principal or other supervisor*
- *Appropriate/professional dress*
- *On the job stress*

Continually disruptive students	
Do	Don't
Withdraw privileges	Keep score for more than a day
Create a behavior contract	Allow too much unstructured time into the schedule
Involve students in making class rules	Let other students encourage the disruptive behavior
Use those eyes in the back of your head	Start the year without a discipline plan
Give a limited, counted number of warnings	Use corporal punishment
Consistently enforce rules	Play tit for tat
Look for a cause of the behavior or a correlation with other activities	Disrupt the class longer than necessary to deal with the disruption
Examine your curriculum for lack of child-centered content	Swear
Work with parents	Be unfair
Report threats of bodily harm	Limit yourself to negative reinforcement
Angry/difficult parents	
Do	Don't
Set a good example	Make unsupported accusations
Make sure you understand what the parent is trying to say	Use sarcasm
Keep the student's best interest in mind	Be distracted from the issues by the personalities
Document dealings with the student and parents	Let problems get out of hand before they are addressed
Know what the school policy is for interacting with parents	Argue or yell
Get to know parents before they become difficult	Be pressured into doing something you know is wrong
Have a witness if you suspect trouble	Take frustration out on the student
Emphasize that you are on the same team	Act superior
Your best to see things from their perspective	Laugh at the parents
Look them in the eye	List your laurels

A dispute with a coworker	
Do	Don't
Give it some time to dissipate	Assume that rumors are true
Avoid overly political topics of discussion	Bad mouth anyone
Collect evidence	Involve students in the dispute
Agree to disagree and move on	Back stab
Get help from a mutually acceptable third party	Rub it in if you are right
Apologize if you were wrong	Let it boil over before you do something
Handle it like you would teach your students to handle it	Even mention the coworker's ethnic or national origin, color, race, religion, sex, etc.
Try to leave that part of work at school	Gang up on the person
Hang out with other coworkers for a change	Dwell on it
Look for some common ground even if it is unrelated	Think you can just change people
A disagreement with your principal or other supervisor	
Do	Don't
Observe advice for disputes with general coworkers	Forget you are talking to your boss
Double check your employment contract	Threaten to quit unless you really mean it
Appeal to a higher authority if necessary	Keep supervisors in the dark about important issues
Get to know supervisors before you have a chance to disagree	Unnecessarily make your problems the supervisor's problem
Give a heads up if you know a parent or student will be contacting them, possibly causing the disagreement	Lose it completely
Show that you have the students' best interest at heart	Bring up other grievances just now
Verify your tenure status	Rule out getting another supervisor
Consider that you might be under extra scrutiny	Use school resources to look for your new job
Build a track record of good judgments they are likely to trust despite any disagreement	Try to get them back
Be a good teacher who they won't want to have to replace	Force their hand and make them fire you
Appropriate/professional dress	
Do	Don't
Dress in a way most parents would approve of their children dressing	Wear religious symbols
Wear school colors and participate in dress up days if teachers are invited	Advertise products on your clothing
Set a good example by wearing appropriate safety equipment	Let your clothing distract students from learning
Remember that you may have to stand in those new shoes all day	Wear more makeup than parents would like their children to wear
Wear a watch or other timekeeping device	Overdress in a way that makes students feel poor
Account for comfort and mobility	Be afraid to wear a hat in winter, even if it gives you hat hair

Keep your glasses on your face or at hand	Wear jewelry that might be tempting to steal
Generally try to follow dress codes that are imposed on students	Poke holes in yourself where parents wouldn't want holes to be in their children
Keep your underwear under	Use clothing as a status symbol
Dress special to honor important occasions in students' lives	Sleep in your clothes and wear them to school the next day
On the job stress	
Do	Don't
Grant yourself a reward now and then	Whine
Get enough sleep	Go it alone
Develop a support network	Take the stress home
Exercise	Expect the impossible
Have someone teach you for a change	Try to drink the problems away
Get a life (outside of school)	Go shopping and add financial stress
Enjoy the summer	Forget to try new things
Have a plan B so you're not trapped	Take it out on students
Reread positive notes from students whose lives you have touched	Play hooky from work
Identify and address the causes	Let it ruin your life