



SHIPMAN

Employee Discipline 101: An Introduction to Best Practices

Connecticut Association of Schools

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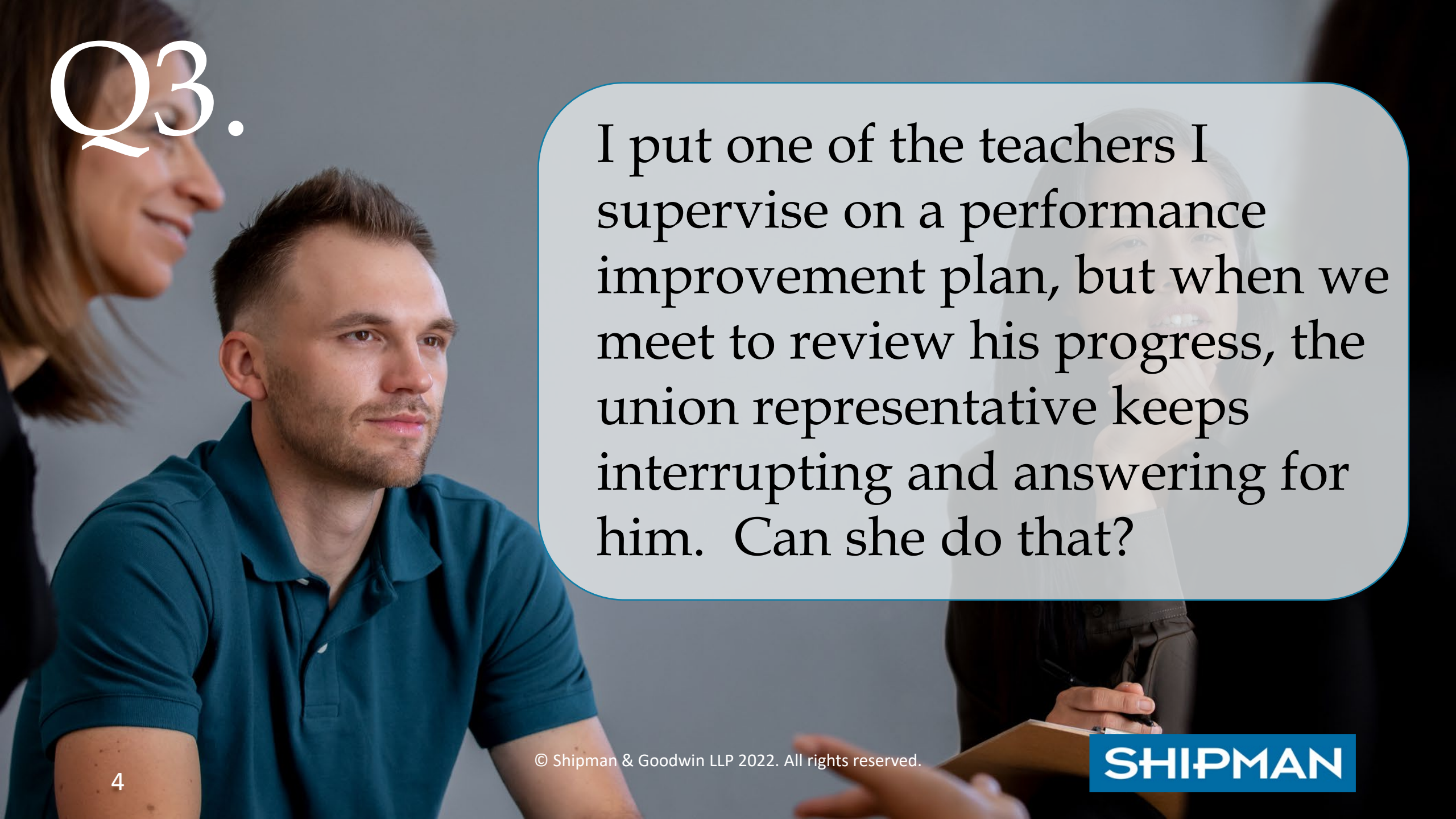
Q1.

I keep personal notes in my right-hand desk drawer to document my concerns with teachers and other employees. One of the teachers in my school has asked for a copy of her “personnel file.” Do I have to share my secret notes with her?



Q2.

A paraeducator has arrived late to work seven times, and her repeated tardiness has imposed hardship on the classroom teacher. Can I suspend the paraprofessional?



Q3.

I put one of the teachers I supervise on a performance improvement plan, but when we meet to review his progress, the union representative keeps interrupting and answering for him. Can she do that?

Q4.

A teacher filed a sexual harassment complaint, alleging that a colleague has been “checking her out.” I interviewed the complainant, but when I scheduled an investigatory meeting with the alleged perpetrator, his union representative told me that I had already violated his rights under Title IX. Really?

Q5.

I hate writing employees up. What can I do to make it easier for me to follow up with employees who need straightening out?

Letter To Follow Up On Conference

TO: *Tom Teacher*
FROM: *Ms. Principal*
RE: *Meeting on January 23, 2022*
DATE: *January 24, 2022*

To follow up on our conference on January 23, I wish to summarize our discussion and my understanding of future steps. At our meeting, we discussed my concern that [describe concern]. You [agreed/disagreed – describe teacher’s position]. We agreed that you would [describe commitment by teacher/directive by supervisor]. Please report back to me by [date] on your efforts. We will meet again to review this matter on [date].

cc: *Personnel File*

Warning Letter

TO: Tom Teacher
FROM: Ms. Principal
RE: Class Supervision
DATE: January 24, 2022

On January 10, 2022, we discussed a report by a paraprofessional that you had left your seventh period class unattended on January 6 for an extended period of time. You stated that you had asked Ms. Smith in the next classroom to keep an eye on your class, and you claimed that you had simply run to the cafeteria for a doughnut.

After reviewing this situation, I find that your conduct on January 6, 2022 was unacceptable. You are responsible for the proper supervision of your class at all times. Your trip to the cafeteria was unnecessary and put the students in your class at risk. Moreover, if there were a problem with the proper supervision of your class, you must address that problem with a responsible administrator, rather than asking a fellow teacher to cover.

This letter will be placed in your personnel file. Any future failure to meet your professional responsibilities will result in further disciplinary action. I hope and trust that any such future action will not be necessary.

cc: Personnel File
Superintendent

Disciplinary Letter

TO: Tom Teacher
FROM: Mr. Superintendent
RE: Class Supervision
DATE: May 4, 2022

On April 30, 2022, your principal walked by your classroom and saw that two students were involved in an altercation in your third period class and you were nowhere to be found. Given the serious concern over your failure to provide proper supervision to students, your principal has referred this matter to me for review and action.

As we discussed at our meeting on May 1, 2022, you explained that you left your classroom unattended to get supplies out of the trunk of your car. You admitted, however, that you did not inform the administration of the need to go to your car and/or to provide supervision for the students in your class.

Failure to provide proper supervision to the students entrusted to your care is a violation of your professional responsibilities and will not be tolerated. Your misconduct is especially serious in light of the recent warning you received concerning the need to supervise the students in your classes. You are hereby suspended for one day for this serious misconduct, and this letter of reprimand will be included in your personnel file. Any such misconduct in the future will lead to further, serious disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation to the Board of Education that your contract of employment be terminated.

*Sincerely,
Superintendent*

*cc: Ms. Principal
Personnel File*

A photograph of a coach in a grey hoodie talking to three student athletes in white and blue uniforms on a grassy field. The coach is on the left, looking towards the athletes. One athlete is in the center, looking back at the coach. Two other athletes are on the right, one looking towards the coach and the other looking away. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting with a blue sky and some trees.

Q6.

One of our coaches swore at student athletes, and we gave him a written warning. Now, a local reporter has asked for the discipline letter and our “interview notes.” Can we deny the request on the basis that it is a confidential personnel matter?

Q7.

My secretary keeps making mistakes, but when I sat her down to tell her that she better improve or else, she grew indignant, telling me, “Well, you know that I have diabetes, don’t you?” Confused, I ended the meeting. What should I have done?

Q8.

A custodian continues to cause trouble, even after a suspension and two written warnings. I am ready to recommend that he be fired, but the union representative is asking me to consider a last chance agreement. What is that, and are such agreements advisable?



Q9.

A school secretary has complained that she has been paid at the wrong rate ever since she was hired three years ago. She is correct, and she is demanding a pay adjustment for the whole time. Should we give it to her?

Q10.

A student claimed that a teacher pushed him into the wall. We filed a report with DCF and put the teacher on leave. DCF took the case, but it is taking forever to complete the investigation. Can we go ahead and do our own investigation?

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Questions?



Thank you for joining us!

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