

MY LITTLE PONY
Season 8
A Matter of Principals
Ep 814
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A MATTER OF PRINCIPALS

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Logline: When Twilight Sparkle leaves Starlight in charge of the School of Friendship, Discord is frustrated he wasn't picked for the job, so he does his best to make Starlight's new role impossible.

TWILIGHT and the MANE 5 are summoned by the map to venture beyond Equestria on what must be a tremendously important friendship quest. Why else would all of them be needed to travel so far? But with all the teachers PLUS the Headmare gone, what will happen to Twilight's School of Friendship? She can't just close it for an impromptu vacation, and she owes it to the students to keep up their education. Inspired, Twilight appoints STARLIGHT GLIMMER as Headmare in her absence. Starlight is a little worried about the magnitude of her responsibility, but she promises Twilight that she won't let her down.

With the Mane 6 gone, Starlight takes charge (with SPIKE as her assistant). They'll need to get up to speed on the lesson plans, find substitute teachers, and continue prepping for the Friendship Field Day coming up – a big, fun day of intramural outdoor activities. Starlight's plans screech to a halt when DISCORD appears, ready to take on his new role as Headdraconequus. When Starlight tells him that Twilight appointed her, Discord is sure there's been some kind of mistake. Isn't this a school where you make your own rules? No pony could be better at that than a Lord of Chaos. Starlight firmly tells him that she's in charge and she doesn't need help. Discord is sour but sly, and tells her to let him know if she changes her mind.

The next morning, Starlight finds Discord in her office, already making mischief (“Nobody was at your desk. SOMEcreature had to take charge.”) As her self-proclaimed Vice-Headmare, he's taken care of hiring new teachers for her, including CRANKY DOODLE, IRON WILL, and a Dragonsneeze Tree. (Which we see in quick, humorous scenes.) Starlight is horrified and Discord says he's happy to change things – if she'll only say she needs help... Digging in, Starlight proudly retorts she can take care of this without him – she was planning on hiring those teachers anyway.

Now the battle of wills is in full swing. Discord sits in Starlight's classes, making them chaos. He steps in as coach, to turn practice for Field Day a hilarious disaster. He takes a turn as janitor, guidance counselor, and librarian, Starlight working to fix his meddling as fast as it happens. Finally she uses a spell to banish him from the school, telling him: “I can handle anything you throw at me!” “ANYthing?” Discord grins as he disappears. Spike warns Starlight that she probably just made things worse, but Starlight doesn't care. She's been entrusted to keep Twilight's school running smoothly, at all costs.

It's time for Field Day, but as the friendship students begin their fun, the event is overrun by mini-Discords, who make the event a complete disaster (apparently the banishment spell only worked on the school, not the school field). Spike finally convinces a frazzled Starlight to just ask for help – it couldn't make things any worse. At her breaking point,

Starlight yells to Discord that she needs his help. Discord appears and snaps his fingers, smugly putting everything back to normal. Apparently he WAS the best for the job. But the students have their own opinion about that, and let him know it. He's made school horrible the last week! They couldn't learn anything, classes weren't fun, and even Field Day was ruined. Discord is hurt to the core – he was certain he would know more than any pony about ruleless schools! Clearly Starlight's pride and Discord's prejudice caused a lot of trouble. Starlight apologizes for not letting Discord help, and he accepts. And then, prompted, admits that maybe she isn't such a bad Headmare after all. Starlight asks him to be her assistant until Twilight and her friends get back, and Discord smacks his forehead. He completely forgot he sent them on that fake friendship quest so he'd get a chance to run the school. Starlight: "Wait, you did what?!"