

Naturally, the environment you are in plays an important role in your outcome as an individual. As an educator, the establishment of a positive classroom environment is critical to all who are a part of it. An assertive and caring teacher has the power to cultivate an environment that meets each student's interests and developmental needs. As a prospective educator, my philosophy on classroom management takes into account the learners, their relationships, the expectations, and the physical organization of the room. My philosophy is highly influenced by Lee and Marlene Canter's assertive discipline philosophy, Marvin Marshall's idea to raise responsibility in children, and Kounin's principle of instructional management. Although student bodies will differ from year to year, establishing a solid classroom management plan that encourages respect and responsibility, will in turn foster student learning.

It is important to consider the discipline perspective when establishing a management plan. Cummings (2000) agrees that "Our goal is to establish a community of learners who feel bonded and connected; such a community exhibits self-discipline and perseverance and takes responsibility for learning" (p. 2). To model these beliefs, appropriate behavior should be taught and behavior should be managed kindly through the implementation of a democratic set of classroom rules. Having students govern a set of rules and consequences provides for a discipline plan that is understood and supported. Establishing rules that are clear, appropriate, and necessary helps cultivate a well-managed classroom.

Expectations can be solidified by a hierarchy of consequences, where consequences are clearly stated by the level of offense. Common examples of this practice are color-coded behavior charts where students are assigned a clip or magnet and move it accordingly based on behavior. Furthermore, during this implementation positive reinforcement should also be acknowledged

through recognition. When used consistently and fairly, students will learn to take responsibility for their actions and become more independent learners.

Establishing a climate of respect where the teacher is viewed as the role model should aid in redirecting disruptive behavior. Respect is an important factor when establishing a positive classroom environment. When students respect the teacher, a relationship is built that acknowledges the adult's role in the classroom making the idea of redirection less of a challenge. "Successful redirection eliminates the need for further intervention" (Panico, 2008, p.2). When utilizing the idea of redirection rather than punishment, active supervision is essential for effective classroom management. Making eye contact to express disapproval toward a behavior and physical proximity are well-known tactics to use in order to prevent behavior issues.

According to Steele (2009), "The skilled teacher usually doesn't allow students enough down time to engage in disruptive behavior" (p. 98), which supports the theory of a well-planned educator. Through proficient planning and organization, a teacher can anticipate behaviors and prevent them, as well. Active involvement will be encouraged and serious disruptions will be limited when the time for transitioning, learning, exploring, and culminating are taken into consideration. Also to be considered are the instructional challenges that teachers face in today's classrooms. As classrooms have become more culturally and academically diverse, educators must consider the management of the distinct learning styles and instructional needs. Planning lessons that meet the needs of learners through differentiation strongly support a well-managed classroom, as students are challenged appropriately and levels of frustration are absent.

More so, when considering a management plan the beginning of the school year is a critical point in time that determines the outcome for the rest of the year. I strongly believe that taking

the time to teach and demonstrate appropriate behaviors and routines will assure a more academically efficient and organized future. According to Gootman (2008), “When students know what is expected of them and when, they can concentrate their efforts on their work rather than on wondering and trying to figure out what they should be doing” (p. 23). Organizing a system of morning routines, assignment regiments, brain breaks, transitions, and response signals will encourage a learning environment void of unnecessary disruptions. Establishing an environment with predictable routines allows children to feel safe and succeed in their academics.

Ultimately, it is the students’ willingness to learn that determines a successful classroom. However, it is the teacher’s responsibility to establish an environment in which students are able and encouraged to learn, free of disruptions and misbehavior. Consistency in the regiment and a continuous flow of activities aids in the management of classroom behaviors and expectations. A respectful classroom environment promotes student engagement, healthy relationships, and self-confidence. In all, I would like to instill in my students a sense of self-awareness by fostering responsibility through student choice and accountability.

## References

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