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Classroom Management

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Classroom Management and Student Achievement

A teacher’s main role is to teacher their students what they need to learn to move onto the next level of education. There are many different ways to reach this goal at the end of the year. Teachers must do this by creating the proper learning environment that will be best for student achievement. Research has pointed to the conclusion that students learn best in an environment that is positive and supportive to their learning needs. Students must feel comfortable in their classroom because they will be more willing to share and cooperate with the learning taking place. This will build relationships and respect between students and their teachers, which will learn to an open and positive environment. Another way that this environment is attained is by setting down rules and parameters that will maintain order and balance in a teacher’s classroom. This is another way that a teacher best gains respect and cooperation from their kids because their students will know what is acceptable and what is not.

Establishing and teaching clearly defined parameters of acceptable behaviors is a critical part of classroom discipline. Every teacher should formally take the time to teach and enforce clearly defined parameters of acceptable student behaviors. The bad thing is that teachers will only announce their rules rather than enforce by actually doing them. The truth is that students do not learn what's announced but they learn what they are taught. It is vital that you teach and enforce both a discipline plan and rules of conduct from the very first day of school. Canter and Canter (1997) describe a discipline plan as an umbrella policy that specifies rules that apply. They also describe rules of conduct as the policies and rules that apply. You must take whatever time is needed to teach both the discipline plan and the rules of conduct as they apply to your class. If you do not formally teach these concepts, students will be confused as they attempt to determine what the acceptable policies and procedures are for the classroom. Also, students who have not been taught rules for acceptable behaviors may test the waters to find out how far they can push the boundaries. Investing time in communicating and teaching your classroom discipline plan and rules of conduct is extremely important, as it will lead to an increase in time spent learning.

A teacher’s discipline plan should cover all rules for all students in all locations. The list should not be too long; that is, five or six rules should be the maximum. A teacher should select rules that are meaningful, specific, and easy to enforce. Rules that are vague like “students should be good at all times” or “students should behave at all times” will be open to misinterpretation. Give students rules that are short and sweet but also get the point across. For example, “keep your hands to yourself” tell students that it is not ok to put hands on their fellow students. They should also establish consequences for when the rules are broken right away so that kids will understand what will happen if they break the rules. One big thing that is important for a teacher it to make sure is the rules are enforced fairly and consistently. If they are not firm and fair when they enforce their rules then kids will be confused on what is ok and what is not. This should not change for students with special needs because when it comes to the rules they must be followed by all students in the classroom. Even though they follow a different academic plan, students with special needs should still treat others with the highest respect so they get the same treatment back.

Your rules of conduct should clearly let students know what the specific behavior standards are for various classroom and building locations and activities. Canter and Canter (1997) recommend that there be three categories of rules of conduct: academic, classroom, and special situation. In academic situations, rules of conduct set specific behaviors that are expected during academics. These rules may include expectations for participating in class discussions, expectations for seat work activities, and what students should bring to class. Rather than just posting rules about academic rules of conduct, a teacher must relate and teacher them in academic situations. For example, a student is talking out of turn or not raising their hand during a class discussion. It is up to the teacher to address it so that students can see in real time what not to do. Students should be able to follow rules like raising your hand to be called on, listen respectfully, and everyone is to participate in class.

Classroom rules of conduct lay down specific behaviors that are expected while students are in the classroom and procedures that students are to follow. These include activities like when to use the pencil sharpener and how to enter and exit the classroom. These rules cover classroom conduct and how students should act during everyday classroom activities. The final category, special situations, covers things like going to the library and how to work with substitute teachers. These rules apply to things that happen during school that do not have to do with the classroom or learning.

When it comes to establishing rules and discipline in a teacher’s classroom, it is important to establish them right away. Do not wait until it happens to enforce it because it will be too late. Respect should always be important in the classroom no matter what. Talking out of turn, disrespect to another classmate, or to the teacher should never be allowed. If the teacher does not squash that immediately it will get out of hand and they will no longer have the respect of their students. Having a firm but fair hand will go a long way for a teacher because their students will know they will get the same treatment across the board no matter what scenario. Respect is one thing that is so important in a classroom because with respect comes cooperation. A classroom is an environment that best thrives in positive relations and an overall positive atmosphere.

Why does the learning environment matter when it comes to student achievement? The classroom is where students will spend most of their time when they are at school. This is why it is very important for a teacher to promote a healthy and positive learning environment for their students. There are many ways to promote a safe, open, and inviting environment for students to come and learn. One way to promote a positive and open environment is to have community build lessons. This means that students will feel ok with putting their thoughts and feelings out in the open during discussions. This will also help with building relationships in the classroom among students and the teacher. Another thing that is important as the teacher is to remain calm at all times. Teachers must think with a level head and must never over react because they might not know the whole story. Not only that, but if the teacher knows how to stay calm in every situation then their classroom as a whole will be a relaxed and calm classroom.

One really important factor in creating a positive classroom is keeping the students highly engaged. Student engagement has for a long time been recognized as the core of effective schooling. However, researchers have come up with the fact that students are not just affected by engagement. Some other categories they have come up with are: motivation, attention, interest, effort, enthusiasm, participation, and involvement (Marzano 2011). These all play a vital role in a student’s achievement in the classroom. Students must be motivated in the classroom otherwise they will have no drive to succeed in the classroom. One thing that a teacher must always remember is that with motivation comes effort. When a student is getting motivated, 100 percent effort must be expected at all times. If a student is giving less that that then he is not trying hard enough. Students must be willing to give all their time and energy into the classroom, which is why teachers must find a way to motivate their students enough so they want to give their all, all the time.

A teacher can also grab their attention by keeping them interested with something they enjoy or like to do. This will keep the students engaged because it will not only be something the students like but it will be in a learning environment so they will learn the material. Another key thing that teachers can do to have a highly engaged classroom is getting the students involved. Students want to feel like they are participating and contributing to the class, so this means that the teacher doesn’t have to do everything. Letting kids even do the little things like leading the pledge of allegiance, stacking chairs, or reading parts of a book, will make the students feel vital to the classroom.

There are many ways to achieve the classroom environment that will lead the highest student achievement. First off kids must be willing to open up and cooperate in the class so their thoughts can be heard. Respect is the most important factor to any classroom because if there is no respect then there is no order. If students do not respect their teacher then they will not follow them, and if students do not respect each other then they will not learn and listen to each other. Teachers must take control early and set their boundaries for what is allowed in the classroom and what is not. Teachers can also give their students tasks and things to take care of in the classroom so they feel important and they are contributing to the learning environment. Researchers have spend many years looking into classrooms to find out just what makes an effective and successful classroom so they can apply it to all education. One thing that always comes back around is respect.

References

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