My Classroom Management Philosophy

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Imagine walking into a classroom where the students are all talking while the teacher is talking, some are running around the room, while some may be listening to the teacher. Something is not right here, the teacher should have the attention of the entire class and no one should be running around. There is not learning going on in this classroom, there is chaos occurring in this classroom.

While observing classrooms I have noticed the teachers who have great classroom management skills achieve more in their lessons that the teachers who do not have great classroom management skills. It is important to me that in my classroom my students are learning and absorbing as much information as they can understand at that given moment.

If a teacher sets the students up for success then the students will succeed. Some important aspects I will incorporate in my classroom are rules and procedures. Procedures are different that rules in the way that rules have consequences when they are not followed and procedures are just something that happens in a classroom every day. They must be rehearsed over and over again until the procedure is stuck in the students’ brains and they know how to enter a classroom or where to put their homework. These procedures do not click right away and will not work over night but after time of rehearsing procedures in my classroom, it will be like a well-oiled machine.

Harry Wong stated in a video, “The first day of school is the most important day of the school year,” (Wong, n.d. b). I am going to work in the summer to make sure my procedures and rules are outlined so that my students know the moment they arrive at school and come into my classroom what the procedures are, such as, “where do we put our coats,” or, “where do I sit?” I agree with Harry Wong, the first day is the most important, because it sets up the rest of the school year. It shows the students what every day will look like, no matter what the lesson plan.

In my classroom I will make it a point to be “with it” and anticipate problem scenarios and have solutions already drawn up in my head. It is important for me to think on my feet as a teacher because there are no “cookie cutter” students who do everything a teacher asks of them. There will be problem students and with effective classroom management skills I will be able to handle their behaviors in my classroom.

Jacob Kounin, according to Marzano, noticed while doing research that if one student was called out in a positive manner, a “ripple effect” would occur throughout the classroom until everyone was sitting with their hands in their laps (Marzano p. 5). In my classroom I will use Jacob Kounin’s observation of ripple effect to my advantage so that I can get my students to listen.

It is also important to me that my students feel safe and comfortable in my classroom. I feel as though students cannot learn if they do not feel safe or if they feel judged by their peers. If a student feels safe and comfortable they are more likely to be engaging in the classroom by answering questions and volunteering more. I also feel that it will help the students to feel safe and comfortable if I, as the teacher, know them well enough to comment on what I notice about a student. Telling a student, “I notice you collect baseball cards, do you like baseball?” is a great way to get the student to feel comfortable with me as a teacher. This also works for student presentations. I have observed the “I noticed” game in an elementary music classroom before where after a student presents an idea the class goes around and says something they liked or noticed about that students idea so that it gets the students thinking more about positives rather than just jumping to, “No, I didn’t like that.” That class also added in “I wonder” into the I noticed game so that they got the other students thinking about things such as, “well I wonder what it would sound like if we played that on a woodblock instead of a drum.” It creates more comradery in the classroom.

It is great to have engaging lessons that have games or interesting facts so that the students are more likely to stay focused and want to participate in lessons. In my classroom I will make sure that when it is time to get work done, work is getting done but I will also throw in a fun aspect to my lessons to keep my student’s attention. Games cannot always be used but fun facts are easy to throw into a lesson because it gets students thinking.

It is important as a teacher to have a positive demeanor, which will be one of my top priorities as a teacher. If the teacher does not look enthused about teaching, why would the students be enthused about learning? According to Marzano and Pickering, “A positive demeanor on the part of the teacher is the second and most general influence on emotional engagement (Mazano & Pickering, p. 5.). This can be effective by showing enthusiasm for what is being taught, verbal and nonverbal expressions, and humor. Marzano and Pickering cited Peter Jonas on page 27 of the book *Laughing and Learning,* “using humor to improve the classroom instruction is not only supported by research, but it has proven to be successful” (Mazano & Pickering, p. 6). Laughing is said to make people feel better, so why not use humor to get students to laugh in my classroom and feel good about what they are learning about?

I have many goals for my classroom; one of the most important is to have effective classroom management. If I am not effective with how I manage my classroom then I should not be a teacher. Effective classroom management starts from day one in the classroom and I will make sure I have rules and procedures set, that I am “with-it,” and that I make my students feel safe and comfortable in my classroom. I will also make it a point to have engaging lessons and have a positive demeanor so that my students are positive as well.

References

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