

Classroom Ready by Yesterday

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EDU 301-02: Classroom Management

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Teachers hold their students and their classroom to a certain standard. It is usually one of high expectations and high achievement. Each educator has a different vision of how this is to be executed. I have certain ideas and procedures which I feel will work well with my classroom. Some teachers may not choose to use the same types of methods, but what I have presented promises the best classroom environment for how I plan to teach. I have a plan for the first few days of class, and the expectations for the flow of my classroom environment. I also have my classroom philosophy for how I have my classroom, and how I plan to connect with the students and parents I will interact with.

Philosophy of Classroom Management

The overall goal of my classroom is to provide students with a warm, challenging community that will motivate learning and promote self-concept. Motivated by the ideas of Marzano, I want to promote enthusiasm in the classroom by incorporating the interests of my students into the content (Marzano 2003). I also plan to have rules which define good behavior. I believe the promotion of self-concept is important for students, as stated by Fay and Funk in *Love and Logic* (2010). I hope to provide a warm, caring environment where students have a sense of comfort and belonging. I will challenge my students to think (Smith, Fischer, Frey 2015). They will benefit from the classes they take with me and learn life lessons along the way. Finally, I will start all of these ideas with me. I need to be an exemplary role model for my students and be prepared each day. Wong and Wong cite Jacob Kounin's 1970s research in his idea that the teacher is the start to a good classroom (2014). I cannot expect great things of my students if I do not expect those same things of myself.

Connections with Students and Parents

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To connect with both students and teachers, I would like to have a meet-and-greet type setting. At the high school I attended, there was a school-wide picnic the night before school started. Here, parents would have a chance to see my classroom and ask any questions they may have about the upcoming semester. I would like to teach at a North Dakota Class B school. At these schools, there is often one teacher who teaches different classes, so I would have year-long agendas (general) for parents to look at for each class. This way, they can see what is expected of their children for a specific class. This is a good way to set the mood for the students as well. They can look at their environment and see first hand what is expected of them.

An additional way to keep in touch with the parents once the semester has started is to have a class Facebook page. Both students and parents may be members, and it will be a place to post important information. This will not be a main source of information, but it will be an additional resource. Students will receive the information they need in class, and emails/phone calls will be made for very important issues with the parents. I will also have a parent letter to send out for more information at the beginning of the school year, as seen in appendix A.

Setting the Tone

The classroom environment I have in place will have somewhat of a strict but laidback tone. The overall rule for my classroom is, "Respect yourself; respect others." I feel this can apply to every situation in the classroom. If a student is not responsible with their work, they are not respecting their education. If a student is acting out in class, they are not respecting other students trying to learn. I feel this will be a huge tool for my classroom to associate with appropriate behaviors and situations. This classroom rule will be one of the first things I discuss due to importance, but I will have to start the day off with introductions.

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I cannot connect with students on a personal or educational level if I do not first let them know who I am. I will have a PowerPoint presentation ready to go for each class that gives a solid understanding of who I am. This will include my hobbies, education, timeline, and other things I find important for students to know. Then, it will be the students turn to share. Because I will be a math teacher, I want to incorporate that into this ice breaker. Each student will create a math equation about themselves. The addition parts are likes, and the subtraction parts are dislikes that equal who the person is. See appendix B for example.

I feel my classroom environment will be relatively easy-going. The students will be able to select their own seats from day one, unless a problem arises. I will be dealing with students at the high school level, so I feel I can give them a chance to act mature for class. My bathroom policy will be simple and disruptive. This idea was shared in class, but it has really stuck with me. The student who wants to use the bathroom simply grabs a hand sanitizer bottle and places it on their desk. This way, there is little to no interruption of class, but I know where the student is.

I will also always have an agenda on the board. I have always enjoyed having an agenda in my own classes, so I feel my students would benefit from this as well. Jacob Kounin was a big advocate for organization and planning, so this is one way I can incorporate that into the classroom (Wong). I will also have extra pens, pencils, paper, and calculators in bins in my classroom, so this may alleviate disruption and stress. It is not a big deal if a student forgets something, and this way he/she does not have to waste time looking for resources. If the same student keeps forgetting, then we will have to have a chat and see if there are other problems present.

The layout for class each day will be routine and consistent. This will help all students prepare for the day, and any students with disabilities will benefit from the predictability of the

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class. In the first five minutes of class, students will hand in papers. This is how I will take attendance for each day. This will be a motivator for students to hand in the assignment on time, as attendance is also part of the participation grade. As part of the agenda, I will have the day's topic on the board, and each student will then have to think about the lesson of the day. They will write down a question about the topic and try to answer it at the end of the lecture. When there is not an assignment due, this will serve as an exit slip and attendance for the day. The questioning of the topic will gain a group focus, one of Kounin's ideas, and it is a start to the day right when the students sit down (Wong).

The rest of the class will be lecture and homework time. Students are expected to be quiet and respectful, but also engage in the lesson. I will ask questions for comprehension and understanding checks. Marzano speaks of the importance of linking class to the interests of students for better understanding. I will try to connect the lesson with realistic scenarios, and have it pertain to student interests. There will most often be extra time in class. With this time, students will be able to start their next homework assignment. If they have questions from the previous assignment, this is the time they may ask them. If the students are done with the assignment, they can work on other homework or go on their phone.

Classroom Policies

A part of high school is extra-curricular activities; sports, Science Olympiad, etc. I think these are great opportunities for all students to be a part of, so I want to be very easy to work with when it comes to absences. As seen in appendix C, I will have an extra-curricular slip for students to fill out. Prior to their absence, they must take a slip for when they will be gone and write down the assignment they will need to make up. They will then sign and date when they plan to hand it in. This will allow a mutual understanding between student and teacher, and also

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help keep students accountable. My phone policy is simple-students may use to look up information. Phones are not to be used during lecture time and may be used after homework is completed. As a consequence, for me seeing them as disruptive, students get a strike. Three strikes equal five percent off the next homework assignment. A form for this can be seen in appendix D. For late work, students are allowed three late assignments per semester. After three late assignments, 10% will be deducted from the overall grade for each day the assignment is late. For group project work, students will be required to hand in check lists of what each member completed for the project. I will then assess each student and give them a participation grade. For students who are tardy, there will be a tardy slip to pick up on the way into the classroom. The students will fill this out and put it on my desk, and I will decide what action needs to be taken based on reason for being late. Constant tardiness will be reflected in participation grade at the end of each semester.

For discipline in my classroom, I believe in dealing with problems in-house. I will deal with the students on my own as much as possible. If I send students to the principal, they will think I do not have power. I will deal with students on a one-on-one setting. If they get in trouble, they will see me on their way out of class. If there are disruptive students, I may do a “take a lap”. I will ask the students to run something to the office or go get a drink, so they take a break from the classroom.

Things to Remember

As an educator, I feel there are a few things I need to remember in the classroom. Citing Kounin, I will ensure I have “with-it-ness” and “smoothness” (Wong). These two factors will immensely improve my classroom. If I am ready to go, my students will be as well. From the UK research, I also have to remember the teacher greeting. This helps students get on task faster and

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creates a more welcoming environment. We also discussed what students want from their teacher. They want to be respected, taken seriously, and be challenged to think. My classroom is not about me; it is about creating better students. If I give them some choice, they will be more likely to thrive in the environment I give. I also need to remember my duty as a mandated reporter. I will pay special attention to all of my students to ensure they are in good hands both at home and at school. It is my job to watch out for them, and I will take that responsibility seriously. I also want to bring in one more reference—the North Dakota Code of Ethics. I found this through research online and it embodies what all good teachers are. It describes what is expected for the students, for coworkers, and for the profession. This will be my guideline to be the best that I can be. Appendix E is the entire Code.

What-If Scenarios

I have come up with three scenarios which would require quick thinking while in my classroom. These include students acting out during class, students coming in late day after day, and students not paying attention/participating in lecture. For a student who is acting out during class, the discipline I have put in place is for them to “take a lap”. I cannot always use this as my go-to. Another option I can use in this situation is confrontation. I will ask the student why they feel the behavior is necessary. An alternative approach is to ignore, as long as the situation does not get out of hand.

For the student coming late every day, I will have to look further into the situation. I will have them schedule a visit with me and we will discuss what is going on. This could be something as simple as a long walk from a different class, but it could also be something as serious as at-home issues. For students not paying attention in lecture, that could be on me. I will switch from a lecture style and instead have students do some independent or group work. They

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may have to take their own notes or do some extra problems for homework. It is hard to say what kind of scenarios I will find day-to-day. I think it is truly impossible to prepare for every situation possible. I just need to stick to my guns and really rely on the rules I have in place for the classroom. Otherwise, I will have to use on-the-spot thinking and remain calm in situations I have not yet dealt with, and I will use rational thinking to come up with a good solution.

Conclusion

In my classroom, there are many things to consider. There probably is not a “most correct” way to do each procedure in every classroom. Each group dynamic is different. I really like the ideas I have presented, but they are on a trial basis. If things do not work in my classroom, I cannot take it personally. I need to use the experience and create a better environment for my students. What works one year may not at all the next. I need to be flexible and creative with what I do. I am really excited to see these procedures in action. I know teaching will present me with a lot of challenges, but I am excited to see where it takes me, and where it takes my students.

References

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Smith, D., Fischer, D., and Frey, N. (2015). *Better than Carrots or Sticks: Restorative practices for positive classroom management*. ASCD: Alexandria, VA.

Wong, H. and Wong, R. (2014). *The Classroom Management Book*. Harry Wong Publications, Inc.: Mountainview, CA.

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Appendix A

Letter to the Parents

Hello All!

My name is Ms. Kate Fox, and I am the 9-12 grade math teacher at John Doe High School. I am very excited for this upcoming year! I think it will be a lot of fun.

A little bit about myself-I grew up in Wing, North Dakota and I graduated from the University of Mary in 2020. This is my first year at John Doe High, and I couldn't be happier. Hopefully you were able to make it to the open house we had, if not, that is okay! I just wanted to welcome you to my classroom and give you the opportunity to see where your sons/daughters will be learning. I want you to know that whenever you need something, do not hesitate to get in contact with me.

I will be happy to discuss any matter with you.

My contact information is as follows:

Ms. Kate Fox

Telephone: XXX-XXX-XXXX (School number)

Fax: XXX-XXX-XXXX (School Fax)

E-mail: kofox@johndoehs.org

Please do not hesitate to get in contact with me!

Thanks!

Ms. Kate Fox

Appendix B

Get to Know the Students-Personal Equation

Running + Math + Coffee - exotic foods - being late = Ms. Fox

Appendix C

Extra-Curricular Absence Slip

Extra-Curricular Absence

Date of Absence: _____

Student Printed Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Assignment(s) to be made up: _____

Date Assignments will be handed in: _____

Signed by Ms. Fox: _____

Appendix D

Phone Disruption Policy

Uh-oh! I used my phone!

Strike 1:

Date: _____ **Student Signature:** _____

Strike 2:

Date: _____ **Student Signature:** _____

Strike 3:

Date: _____ **Student Signature:** _____

Homework Assignment that loses

5%: _____

Ms. FOX: _____

Appendix E

Code of Professional Conduct for Educators

Article 67.1-03

State of North Dakota

Code of Professional Conduct for Educators

Section 67.1-03-01-01

Preamble

The educator recognizes that education preserves and promotes the principles of democracy. The educator shares with all other citizens the responsibility for the development of educational policy. The educator acts on the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens. The educator promotes the worth and dignity of each human being and strives to help each student realize the student's potential as a worthy, effective member of society. The educator, therefore, works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals. The educator measures success by the progress each student makes toward the realization of his/her potential as an effective citizen. The educator regards the employment agreement as a solemn pledge to be executed both in spirit and in fact in a manner consistent with the highest ideals of professional service. The educator accepts the responsibility to practice the profession according to the highest ethical standards. The educator strives to raise professional standards to improve service and achieve conditions which attract highly qualified persons to the profession.

The following code of professional conduct of the education standards and practices board governs all members of the teaching profession. A violation of this section constitutes grounds for disciplinary action which include the issuance of a warning or reprimand or both, suspension or revocation of the license of the affected educator, or other appropriate disciplinary action.

History: Effective July 1, 1995; amended effective August 1, 2002.

General Authority: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-09, 15.1-13-10

Law Implemented: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-10.

Section 67.1-03-01-02

Principle I - Commitment to the Student

In fulfilling obligations to students, the North Dakota educator:

1. Shall not, without just cause, deny the student access to varying points of view;
2. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program;
3. Shall protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning or to physiological or psychological well-being;

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4. Shall not engage in physical abuse of a student or sexual conduct with a student and shall report to the education standards and practices board knowledge of such an act by an educator;
5. Shall not harass, discriminate against, or grant a discriminatory advantage to a student on the grounds of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, physical or mental conditions, family, social, or cultural background, or sexual orientation; shall make reasonable effort to assure that a student is protected from harassment or discrimination on these grounds; and may not engage in a course of conduct that would encourage a reasonable student to develop a prejudice on these grounds;
6. Shall not use professional relationships with a student for personal advantage or gain;
7. Shall disclose confidential information about individuals, in accordance with state and federal laws, only when a compelling professional purpose is served or when required by law; and,
8. Shall accord just and equitable treatment to all students as they exercise their educational rights and responsibilities.

History: Effective July 1, 1995; amended effective August 1, 2002.

General Authority: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-09, 15.1-13-10

Law Implemented: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-10

Section 67.1-03-01-03

Principle II - Commitment to the Profession

In fulfilling obligations to the profession, the North Dakota educator:

1. Shall accord just and equitable treatment of all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities;
2. Shall not, on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, physical condition, family, social or cultural background, or sexual orientation, deny to a colleague a professional benefit, advantage, or participation in any professional organization, nor discriminate in employment practice, assignment, or evaluation of personnel;
3. Shall not sexually harass a fellow employee;
4. Shall withhold and safeguard information acquired about colleagues in the course of employment, unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose;
5. Shall present complete and accurate information on the application for licensure and employment;
6. Shall present complete and accurate information on any document in connection with professional responsibilities;
7. Shall present evaluations of and recommendations for colleagues fairly, accurately, and professionally;

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8. Shall cooperate with the education standards and practices board in inquiries and hearings and shall not file false complaints or shall not seek reprisal against any individuals involved with the complaint;
9. Shall not knowingly distort, withhold or misrepresent information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment;
10. Shall not breach a professional employment contract;
11. Shall not knowingly assign professional duties for which a professional educator's license is required;
12. Shall not accept a gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence or appear to influence professional judgement, nor offer a gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantage; and
13. Shall exhibit professional conduct in safeguarding and maintaining the confidentiality of test materials and information.

History: Effective July 1, 1995; amended effective August 1, 2002.

General Authority: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-09, 15.1-13-10

Law Implemented: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-10

Section 67.1-03-01-04

Principle III - Commitment to the Community

In fulfilling these obligations to the public, the North Dakota educator:

1. Shall distinguish between personal views and the views of the employing educational agency;
2. Shall not distort or misrepresent the facts concerning educational matters; and,
3. Shall not interfere in the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of others.

History: Effective July 1, 1995; amended effective August 1, 2002.

General Authority: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-09; 15.1-13-10

Law Implemented: NDCC 15.1-13-08, 15.1-13-10