Classroom Management Plan

Summary:

I believe my classroom management should create an environment in which every student feels respected and is able to learn. Respect, responsibility, individuality and self-discipline are all important to me. My philosophy of classroom management is to help students take responsibility for their actions and behaviors and to develop social skills that are necessary beyond the classroom.

In order to have an effective learning environment, it is critical that each student and the teacher feel respected by each other. Students need to feel valued and comfortable in the classroom so they are willing to participate and take risks in their learning. In an article by Miller and Pedro (2006), “Wessler defines a respectful classroom as a place where all students feel physically and emotionally safe and valued for whom they are” (p. 294). This article also states how important my observations and actions as the teacher will be in creating a respectful learning environment among my students in the classroom. “To create a respectful classroom the teacher must notice the interactions of students and follow-up if something unusual or harmful is happening, and show no tolerance for social exclusion or harassment of individuals within that environment” (p. 296).

Miller and Pedro (2006) also discuss how a large part of creating a respectful environment is done through the development of relationships (p. 296). Relationships are a core principle of my classroom management plan. It is important for the teacher and students to develop relationships and get to know each other. Each student is a unique individual who brings many strengths to the classroom. It is important that students realize they are each important in our classroom community and that it is okay to have differences among us, but that
we can all work and learn together. As the teacher, it will also be critical that I develop relationships with each student and am able to recognize their unique needs in the classroom. I will need to get to know each student so that I can plan appropriate instruction for the particular students in my class.

Children need to develop social skills to use both in the classroom and in the world beyond the classroom. A quote by Alice Waters is included in a text by Wong & Wong (2009), where she stated “the aim of education is to provide children with a sense of purpose and a sense of possibility and with skills and habits of thinking that will help them live in the world” (p. 83). I do not want a classroom full of rules and procedures that does not give students the opportunity to learn social skills. I want to guide them and help them figure out how they can solve problems on their own as they will need to be able to do this throughout their entire lives. Donna Crawford and Richard Bodine developed the management method of conflict resolution and Hardin (2012) states the following: “as Bodine and others stress, conflict is a part of life, and without conflict there would be no personal growth or social change. It is important that students learn effective ways of dealing with the types of conflict they will encounter throughout their lives” (p. 216). Personally, I like that “conflict-resolution education moves away from the focus on punishment” (p. 216) and has the goals “to create a constructive learning environment where students feel safe to express ideas and feelings” and “to enhance student social and emotional development by giving them the tools to deal with values different from their own” (p. 216).

I also agree with the basis of Barbara Coloroso’s theory of Inner Discipline. Hardin (2012) states “Coloroso is more concerned with having students think about their behaviors and how their behaviors impact others than with providing punishments and consequences for inappropriate behavior” (p. 182). I want my method of classroom management to give students
the opportunity to think about their actions and how they should change their behaviors instead of just punishing them for misbehavior. In order for students to stop inappropriate behavior, they need to understand why the behavior is unacceptable and what they can do to change it. I think it is important to have students reflect on their actions and think about how they can change them to create a better learning environment for themselves and their peers. I plan to incorporate the program of Love and Logic in my classroom. This program allows for the opportunity to consider the individual child involved and the particular situation and for the student and teacher to work together and develop a plan that will solve the problem.

Another theory that takes into account the reason for misbehavior and develops appropriate consequences for that misbehavior is Rudolf Dreikurs model of Logical Consequences. As explained by Hardin (2009), Logical Consequences uses “the concept that the motivation and goals of student behavior must be considered in the development of a discipline plan” (p. 81). I like that “the premise behind Logical Consequences, however, is not just to control behavior but also to assist students in taking responsibility for their actions and behaviors” (p. 81). This fits well with my goal of having a classroom management plan that requires students to develop and use social skills. I believe it is important to help students take responsibility for their behavior in the classroom, as this is something they will have to do all throughout life.

Based on my philosophy of classroom management and the characteristics of a management plan that are important to me, I have developed strategies that I plan to use in my classroom. I have thought about materials that I will use of the first day of school to help develop relationships with my students right at the beginning of the year. I have also thought
about how the organization of the physical and social environments in my classroom will look based on my philosophy of classroom management.

**Preparation/Materials for the First Day of School:**

Before the first day of school, I will spend time preparing by organizing the classroom and getting lessons and the necessary materials ready to go. I will spend time creating a welcoming classroom environment by putting up bulletin boards and posters that will be a message to students as soon as they walk into the classroom that it is a fun and engaging learning zone. Wong and Wong (2009) discuss the importance of preparation. “A cluttered or barren room sends a negative message to your pupils that you don’t care for them. A well-organized, attractive room sends a positive message that you respect them enough to provide a pleasant environment, and they will return the respect to you” (p. 91).

Relationships are a key component to my classroom management plan. On the first day of school, I want to focus on getting to know the students in my class along with helping them get to know one another. I will greet my students at the door of our classroom and then we will spend some time sharing about ourselves and playing get to know you games to ensure everyone feels valued in our classroom community.

On the first day of school, I will focus on building community and getting to know each other. I will also introduce classroom procedures and rules. I want to take the time for everyone to get to know each other and the procedures we will follow throughout the year. I will remember the advice a teacher gave me of “going slow to go fast.” I won’t get too worried if we do not get through many lessons in the first few days of school. It is important to get to know each other and carefully go over classroom rules and procedures. There is a quote by Lim Chye Tin in the text by Wong and Wong (2009) that says, “You seemingly waste a little time at the
beginning to gain more time at the end” (p. 193). If we take the time at the beginning of the school year to set up procedures and develop a strong sense of community, we will be able to accomplish more throughout the school year.

**Organization of Physical Environment:**

The classroom will be set-up in the way that allows for maximum proximity control and for the teacher to be able to easily walk among the students. This is a key point to Fredric Jone’s model of classroom management, Positive Classroom Discipline. Hardin (2012) explains that “to maintain appropriate control, teachers must constantly work the crowd by moving throughout the classroom and being at every desk” (p. 64). Along with easily being able to get to all areas in the classroom, Wong and Wong (2009) say that it is important to “arrange work areas and desks so that you can easily see and monitor all the students and areas no matter where you are in the room” (p. 95). I will need to make sure that I can observe all areas of the room from my desk and all small group and large group teaching areas.

Developing literacy is important to me and because of this, I will have an area in my classroom for a classroom library. I want to have shelves and shelves full of books for my students to read along with a couch or beanbag chairs for them to be able to read in a comfortable place.

I want to arrange the desks in my classroom in groups to allow for a large amount of group work and student collaboration. Students can learn so much from each other and through the conversations they share about what they are learning and I want to give them many opportunities to do so.

Please see the attached classroom layout.
Organization of Social Environment:

We will have some key rules and procedures in our classroom to guide our work together. The following are the key rules that will be in my classroom:

- Treat each other and the teacher with respect.
- Do not talk while the teacher or a classmate is talking (unless working in groups).
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.

These rules will be communicated by sending a note home to parents in the beginning of the year to let them know what rules their children will be expected to follow in my classroom. I will also have the rules written on a poster in the classroom and we will discuss them quite a bit as a class in the beginning of the school year and occasionally or when needed throughout the rest of the school year.

I want to incorporate a variety of activities in my lessons that include a mix of whole-group work, small groups, partners and individual work. I want students to have the opportunity to work with each other and share ideas, but there will also be times when they will need to work on their own and show me what they are able to do.

I will have bins or trays for my students to turn in their class work and homework. I will have one bin for each subject and one for notes for the teacher. This system will help the students and I keep their work organized. The students will always know where to put their work when they finish it and they won’t have to ask me each time they complete an assignment.

Before each transition in my classroom, I will state my behavioral expectations so students know exactly what they are to do and the room won’t become chaotic. Also, if students have been working for a long period of time, I will give movement breaks and do something to get them up and moving so they are ready to focus and start working again.
**Classroom Incentives:**

To encourage my students and their positive behavior, I will verbally give them compliments when I see positive behavior throughout the day. I will also write notes to individual students who are behaving appropriately or make “sunshine” phone calls home to tell the student’s parents the good news about their child’s behavior in the classroom.

To encourage the students to stay on task and behave throughout the week, I will allow students who have completed all of their work throughout the week and had no behavioral issues to participate in a Friday project or learning game. I think this will motivate the students to do their work and stay on task throughout the week. If they know they will have the opportunity to participate in a fun learning activity at the end of the week, I think they will be more likely to stay on task during the week.

I do not believe in the classroom management systems where the class can earn marbles or have marbles taken away and are then rewarded with a special prize or treat when they earn a certain number of marbles. I feel that this is a bribe to get the students to behave and do their work. I want to challenge my students to develop intrinsic motivation to behave appropriately and complete their work.

**Classroom Management Strategies:**

I believe my classroom management plan should enable students to take responsibility for their actions and behaviors and help them develop social skills that are necessary beyond the classroom. I will respond to disruptive behaviors that are inhibiting the teacher’s teaching or other students’ learning. I plan to incorporate the program of Love and Logic. I believe each student and situation is unique and that I should do what is best to take care of the problem depending on the child involved and their needs. The following is the basis for Love and Logic:
• I will treat you with respect and you will know how to treat me.

• Feel free to do anything that doesn’t cause a problem for anyone else.

• If you can’t solve the problem or choose not to, I will do something.

• What I will do will depend on the special person and the special situation.

• If you feel something is unfair, whisper to me ‘I’m not sure that’s fair’ and we will talk (Love & Logic, 2010).

I will give the student two reminders or warnings that they need to think about their behavior before I pull them aside and talk to them. We will then work together to come up with a solution for the problem. If I am in the middle of teaching and cannot meet with the student at that moment, I will ask them to take a “thinking chair” where they will go to a quiet place in the room and reflect on their actions and what they might do to turn things around. As soon as I have an opportunity to break away from the rest of the class, I will go talk with that student and figure out a solution to the problem.

**Sample Visuals That I Will Use In My Classroom:**

See the attached document with pictures of the following:

• Class Calendar

• Attendance/Lunch Count System

• Love & Logic Poster

• “We Read Good Fit Books” Poster

• Reading Strategies Bulletin Board

• Multiple Intelligences Class Project Bulletin Board
**Building Community:**

A sense of community is a large part of my classroom management plan. I want each student to know that they are an important and valued part of the class. I will also invite parents to be a part of our classroom community and let them be involved in the classroom through volunteer and tutoring opportunities. Students will participate in many community-building activities in the beginning of the school year and we will continue to develop our classroom community throughout the school year. Some of the community building activities I will use in my classroom are:

- **Name Games (see the attached documents)**
  - Name & Food Game
  - Web of Names
  - Action Syllables
- **Ice Breakers (see the attached documents)**
  - Beach Ball
  - M & M Game
  - Coin Toss
  - Conversation Wheel
  - What did you do this summer? Scavenger Hunt
- **Team Building Activities (see the attached document)**
  - Sentence Relay
- **Class projects that focus on each individual student and their unique characteristics – create people showing each students’ learning styles**
• Service Projects – make cards for a nursing home, decorate lunch bags for a food pantry organization

• Giving students the opportunity to share their work on the Elmo (keep track of who has shared and make sure everyone gets a chance)

• Students having classroom jobs

• Reading buddies/partners

• Group work where the groups are always changing

• Working with other classes in the school (same grade or different) – reading buddies, reader’s theater performances, service projects

• Students sharing their work with each other and giving compliments and one piece of constructive criticism or one area to work on (strategy to use during writing workshop for peer editing)