

Classroom Management Final Project

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As an educator, I will foster positive learning, independence, and creativity in a safe environment. The renowned behavioral theorist John Dewey concluded that students learn best through an experiential education. This means that a hands-on experience is the best approach to learning (“Experiential Education”). As such, I will apply this to my classroom daily, appealing to the many learning styles of my students. Not only will this be applicable in a general education setting, but if I were to be in a special education position, this would also be a primary focus of mine. Many students benefit from kinesthetic and visual teaching styles, both of which are fundamental components of project based learning.

The emphasis of safety will be a primary focus within my classroom. Safety is imperative to learning in any classroom. Often times this seems as if it is a simple and easy concept to implement safety in the classroom. This includes fire drill procedures, running in the hallways, avoiding slipping hazards in the classroom etc. . . . , which are all great practices, but they fail to address safety in what some would describe as its greatest form, emotional safety. Emotional safety is of the utmost importance within a classroom because if students do not feel emotionally safe, they simply cannot learn. This is to say that I will make it a priority for each of my students to feel comfortable in the classroom interactions between peers, myself, and any other individuals that may enter my classroom. In order to allow for emotional safety within a classroom relationships must be formed within the classroom community. This is not to say that all students will always get along, or that I expect my students to get along always, however I will demand a mutual respect from each and every student within my classroom. As a means of forming relationships with all of my students I will make it a point each and every day to ask how they are, and ask at least five students about something in their lives that does not associate

to my class at all. By showing an interest in students, it relays the message that you care about them and are invested in their well-being. Another way to make students feel emotionally safe within my classroom will be through humor. By displaying a sense of humor, students will be able to see me on a human level, instead of constantly being put up on a pedestal as teachers often are. Humor does not need to be inappropriate, but is used to create a sense of welcoming and lightheartedness within the classroom setting. It is my goal to make an impact

Another way I will create an emotionally safe classroom is by greeting my students each day as a class when they come in and individually as they leave. For the low price of five dollars I can purchase an “Incredible Hulk” fist from the store that I will use to say goodbye to my students at the end of the day. This is a great relationship builder, because it allows for students to see my sense of humor, as well as experience my interests outside of school such as superheroes.

In my experience students only remember two things when it comes to their teachers. The first is always the bad, whether it be one outburst of frustration among a year of fun and joy, the bad is always remembered. The second thing that is always remembered by students is the weird. As an educator, I aspire to be the weird, I will be the crazy. Not because I want my students to think of me as insane, but because I want to be known as the teacher they learned from. By introducing concepts or problems in wacky unimaginable ways, students will retain the information. Though I will make a fool of myself at times undoubtedly, and sometimes tell a corny joke for a cheap laugh, I will be remembered, because I will not be the norm.

On the first day of school I will welcome each student into my room and they will each take a seat at an unlabeled desk. I have attached a seating plan that I have found is the best for my classroom, because students will be able to work together in groups, while still being able to

see me during instruction times. I will then explain that I have a bin with each of their names on it for them that they will keep at a station in the back of the room. I will then point out a table to the side which I will explain will be used for group work, and my desk. Among the topics I will cover on the first day of school, will be my bathroom policy, and my expectations for class. The most important of these will be displayed at the front in the form of a poster. I will also ask the students to help me create a list describing “what a good friend/student does in the classroom” and “what a good friend/student does not do in the classroom”. This will be a reference used all year, because it is a creation from the students. Also as part of the first day I will provide the students a bingo game designed to get to know other students. The board will have simple questions such as “Who’s favorite color is blue?” and students must have somebody in the class sign their boxes to create a bingo without using somebody more than once. This is a great way for students to get to know each other and to begin a sense of community within the classroom.

As an educator, I will set up multiple means of communication and connection with students and parents. For my students, I will have the daily schedule posted every day on the white board as well as the materials that they will need for them. This will be accompanied by some visual aids, and will communicate exactly what the students will need without the need for students to ask me. Along with the agenda will also be the homework and assignments for the entire week, so that if students miss an announcement due to absence they can catch up and know what needs to be done.

Another means of communication that I will use will be social media. I will create a private facebook page strictly for myself, my students, and their parents in order to create a sense of community and to share what is happening within my classroom. This is a great way for parents to see progress as well as communicate any questions or needs that they may have.

Though I will also provide my phone number and email to parents I feel as if the institution of social media within the academic setting is becoming part of the norm and is an effective means of sharing information between home and school.

At the start of the year I will provide parents with a letter introducing myself as well as my plans for my class within the coming year. Likewise, I will provide my contact information for them as well as any information they will need. Each month I will send a similar letter addressing all of the upcoming events in my classroom and any recognitions or opportunities that I may desire to announce during that time. This is a great way to keep parents in the loop that does not require a lot of time from myself or them.

Alternate strategies I may consider are adaptations for special education students. The purpose of the Least Restrictive Environment is for students who require special education to spend the maximum amount of time possible integrated within a general education classroom. That being said, there will be necessary accommodations that need to be put in place in order for the day to run smoothly. Something that I would like to implement is a fidget box. This will simply be a box full of fidgets that students may “rent” using a sign out journal and must return before leaving for the day. The deal will be that students must not choose a fidget that will be distracting to their learning, and they must not leave the room with the fidgets unless given special permission. This will allow students to become more focused in the classroom and prevent some behaviors that could be distracting.

APPENDIX

Dear Parents/Guardians,

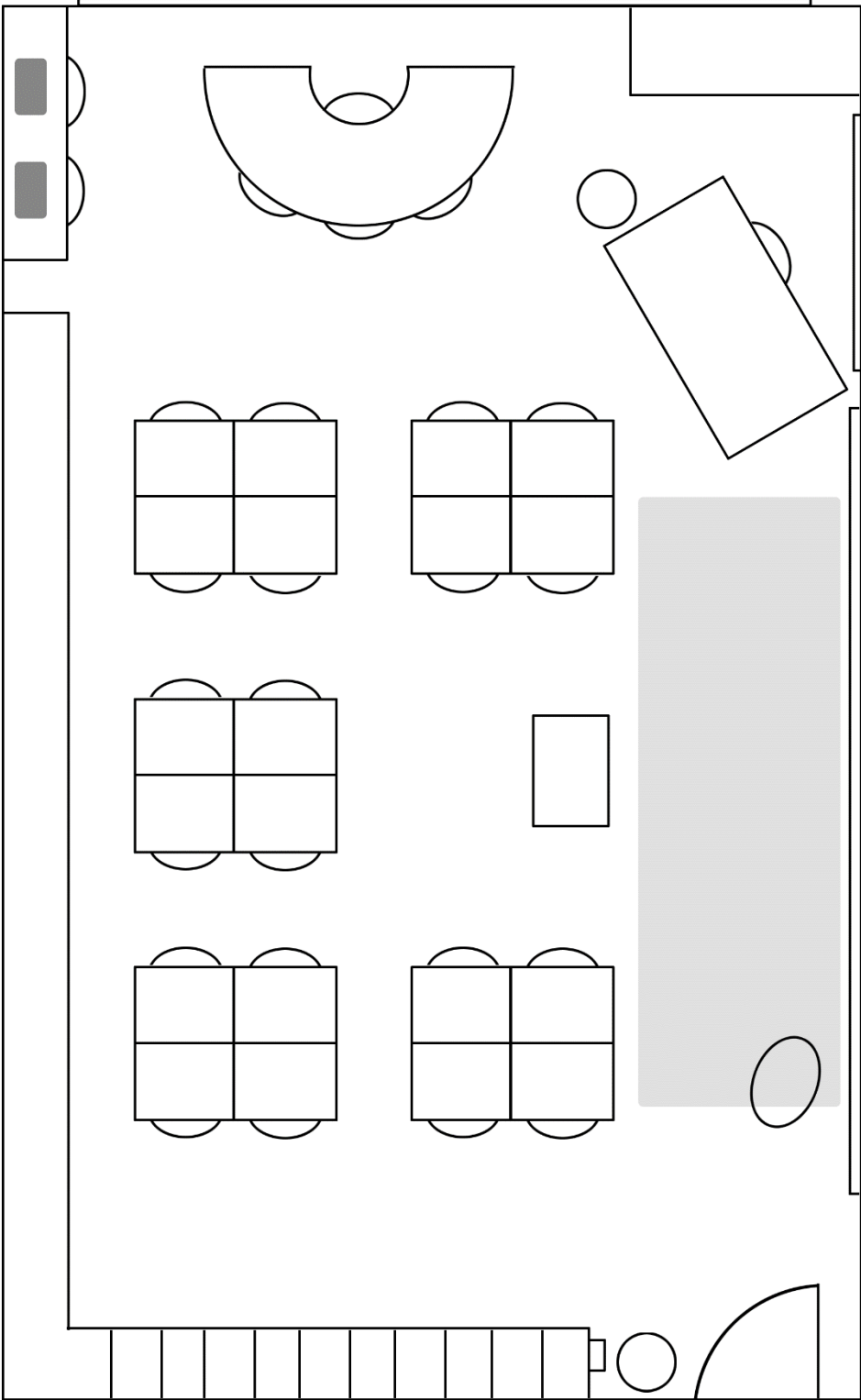
My name is Alex Cournoyer and I am honored to be your child's teacher this coming school year. My classroom will be a safe environment where your children will be given opportunities to grow and thrive throughout the next year. It is my practice to send home a monthly letter with each child listing the activities and focuses that will be addressed in the coming month. I am a huge advocate for parental involvement, because I need you! Parents much like teachers have the opportunity to affect their child's lives unlike any other. I hope to open with you a steady stream of communication so that we can be on the same page and address any obstacles that may await us. Among my plans is to create a facebook group for myself as well as all parents to communicate through and to keep everybody updated on our weekly adventures in my classroom. My email is ajcournoyer1@umary.edu and my phone number is 401-200-1641. Please feel free to contact me at any time, and I will get back to you as soon as possible. Thank you so much for your time, I cannot wait to see where the year takes us!

Sincerely,

Alex Cournoyer

Find someone in our class who.....

B	I	N	G	O
has read all of the Harry Potter books	has traveled outside the United States	has a sibling in this school	went to a Chiefs game this summer	green in their favorite color
has two or more pets	has brown eyes	is left handed	has a skateboard	went to the beach this summer
likes to watch baseball	favorite season is winter	Free Space!	is wearing brand new shoes	plays a musical instrument
born in the same month as you	can name the four members of The Fresh Beat Band	had cereal for breakfast	can do a magic trick	has been on a plane
walks to school	likes mushrooms on their pizza	has a clean bedroom closet	is wearing blue	has a dog



References

“Experiential Education”. *Learnnc.org*. N.p., 2017. Web. 20 Apr. 2017.

Wong, Harry K et al. *The Classroom Management Book*. 1st ed. Print.