

## Classroom Management Plan

When teaching, it is important that everything a teacher does has the best interest of the students in mind. The best way to do this is to take a student-centred approach. In the following paragraphs, I will explain my philosophies on physical environment, routines, classroom rules, discipline, time management, group work, and diversity in the classroom which will reflect my student-centred approach on teaching.

### Physical Environment

I will have a classroom that has a very positive physical environment. It is important that the physical environment of the classroom is inviting, filled with natural light, positive posters, and a desk arrangement that allows for group work and individual work to be done easily. It is important that the classroom arrangement is open as possible, but still does not create groups of students larger than four. I do feel that it is important to change the arrangement of the classroom every month or so to break up the routine a bit. It is also important that the seating arrangement be changed often, so chemistry can be created between different groups of students creating a greater sense of community in the classroom.

The importance of open space in the classroom is not lost on me. It is very important that students be able to move around and have mini breaks where they can stretch and move around. A lot of space for activities is necessary in the modern classroom. Posters of inspiring quotes can be very motivational for students. The bulletin board will be full of student work which will depict the current theme in the classroom whether it happens to be a seasonal theme or a curriculum based theme.

In the gym, it is important that everything has its place. The gym should look exactly the same every time students enter it. For example, equipment should always have one location, so

students know where to find it and where to put it away. Having a well-organized gym makes the environment safer for the student. This is a skill I have learned while coaching basketball.

Currently in my second year of coaching the same team, returning players now ensure that the physical environment stays safe. Balls have one location to be placed during practice when not in use and water bottles have one place to go when not in use. This is not something I enforce this season; the players self-enforce.

### Routines

Routines make days run smoothly and allow for teachers to give students more independence. When a strong routine is set, a classroom becomes self-sufficient and when this happens teachers are able to focus their time on teaching instead of managing students. Routines are especially important for younger ages. A strong routine can make the difference in a student's life; especially if that student does not get a strong routine in their home life.

Although a strong routine allows for a classroom to run seamlessly, it is still very important to change little pieces of a routine from time to time to teach students that a small change in the day does not mean the world is ending. Students need to learn that life goes on even when their day does not follow the exact plan. It is important to be flexible with routines when necessary. If an aspect of a routine does not work then I must be flexible enough to change that portion of the routine, even if it is part of the routine that I really like.

When coaching basketball, I have found times when a routine needs to change. I put a lot of time into designing the team's warm-up each year, but sometimes what I design does not work. Either the players do not get pumped up by the drill or they struggle to understand the concept of why we are doing the drill. If this is the case the routine is not serving its purpose (to warm up the players and to mentally prepare them to play a game), so there is no benefit to

keeping the routine the same. The same can be said for the pregame routine that we perform as a team. If part of that routine is not preparing the team to play their best that game, then it serves no purpose.

In a Phys. Ed., class routine is just as important. Students should have one location that they go to for the first month or more, so their bodies are trained to go to that place and be quiet. Classes should all have similar structures. For example, opening, warm-up, skill of the day, cool-down. In an elementary class, I would run a tag game as the warm-up almost every day, but I would change the version of tag being played. Student`s come to class ready to burn off some energy and by playing tag they are able to burn off that energy. They also know what they are going to get to do at the beginning of every class.

### Classroom Rules

In the classroom, there is not one set of classroom rules that I would use each year. It is very important that students give input into what they feel the rules of the classroom should be. It is important that the rules that students create or positive. The rules should define how the class feels they should act, and not what students feel is unacceptable. By having the students determine and define the rules, they not only take ownership of the rules, but also fully understand the expectations of the rules because they defined them. Rules should be simple and broad, which makes it very important that students define what they mean. If rules are too specific, students will find negative actions that do not actually fit under the rules that were created. When students are creating rules, they will create rules that are too specific. It is important to explain how the specific rule would fit better under the broader rule, but still explain that the rule the student created fits under the less specific rules.

With an older age group, the only rule that need to be put into place is to respect yourself and those around you. It is important for students to define this as well, so they fully understand the meaning of the rule. If students act respectful to everyone around them, it covers every rule you could ever make. When coaching basketball, I am sure to make clear to the students who they are representing whenever we are together as a team, so even if they are okay with looking disrespectful themselves, they understand it is not just a reflection of them.

In the gym, a different approach must be taken for the sanity of the teacher. I would create three simple rules for the gym to be followed by all classes. My rules would be to listen, play fair, and work hard. The first day of classes, I would have each class define what they think each of these rules mean. These rules would be posted somewhere in the gym, so I could refer to them when necessary. By having students define the rules they still have an understanding of what the expectations are when they are in Phys. Ed. I also have the ability to direct the conversation to cover all of the points that I feel need to be covered.

### Discipline

When disciplining students, consequences must be a direct relation to the rule that was broken. For example, when coaching basketball, if a player skips practice without notifying me, playing time is taken away because they were not present to learn the skills necessary to play in the game. Players also need to explain to me why they were not at practice and why I was not notified that they would not be at the practice. In a school setting, it is important that the first time a student breaks a rule, that they understand why their action is considered negative. It is important to maintain control and treat each student equitably.

## Time Management

Time management is important for many different reasons as teacher, but the key is to prioritize tasks. It is also important to not be so involved in managing your time that quality of content is lost. Part of positive youth development is mastering skills, so it is better, as a teacher, to take a step and make sure students fully understand one topic before moving on to the next. If students do not understand how to add numbers with answer up to 20 in grade 1, then they will struggle to learn the concepts of addition for larger numbers in grade 2. My point being, “covering” the curriculum does not mean I have done my job as a teacher if the class does not understand the concepts that I have covered. It is also unrealistic to have a 100% success rate when managing curriculum time. A balance must be found. It is just as important that too much time is not spent on one topic, making class boring for some students.

For Phys. Ed., managing the curriculum is a bit different. It is much easier for students to learn skills at their own pace because the goal is not necessarily for each student to have the same skill level at the end of a unit. When creating a plan, I would expose students to as many activities as I could while still giving students an opportunity to master some sport/activity specific skills. At younger ages sport/activity specific skills are not taught. The focus is on creating fundamental movements that are necessary for all activities and everyday life.

## Group Work

Group work is very important in the classroom whether it is having a class discussion or it is a major project. I do not believe there is one way that groups should be chosen every time group work is assigned. I believe in most cases, the teacher choosing the groups is the best option. My first issue with students always choosing their own groups is that they will not learn to work with different people. When students form groups, many will already be cohesive, but if

groups are already cohesive, students are not learning how to create cohesion. Wanting everything to run smoothly as a teacher lends itself to the thinking that we just want to get through the curriculum as quickly and easily as possible with the best RESULTS possible. I disagree with this thinking because I do not believe in teaching for results. To clarify, by results I mean test marks or grades. One of the lessons necessary to learn in school is that, in life, students will not always be able to determine who they work with. A boss will not pair employees together just because they are friends.

If there is not a lot of time for a project to be completed due to time constraints during a school year, it may be better for students to choose their own groups. If this were to happen near the end of the year, time for cohesion may not be necessary if the class has a strong sense of community. At the beginning of the year, it may be more important for students to be more comfortable, so it might be a good time of year for students to choose groups depending on the class. When coaching last year, at the beginning of the season the team was very segregated by grades (9-12), but by the end of the season, the entire group hung out with each other. I could group any many different combinations together and the team was still successful.

### Diversity in the Classroom

When teaching diversity, my goal is for students to understand that they are each different, have some similarities, and regardless what those differences and similarities are we should appreciate ourselves and each other. As a teacher, it is important to help students to be comfortable with themselves. The purpose of teaching diversity in the classroom is not to look at superficial differences. I want my students to learn to be understanding and empathetic towards those around them.

By promoting diversity in the classroom and teaching students equality and equity, a classroom community will form which makes school a more enjoyable experience for students. By appreciating the differences in each classmate, students will grow into mature, accepting people who understand how they can benefit from the experience and interests of others. It will also teach students more about themselves and improve self-esteem.

### Conclusion

Anything done in the classroom has to be student-centred. If what I am doing in the classroom is not benefiting the students or focusing on the students then it has no purpose. I want to be a teacher because I enjoy developing young human beings. Teaching is more than just teaching a set list of outcomes or skills; teaching is developing the whole student. I have outlined my philosophies on physical environment, routines, classroom rules, discipline, time management, group work, and diversity in the classroom which I feel reflect a student-centred approach.