

Creating a Successful Environment

Every minute counts!



The tone you set and create the first days of school will tell your students more than anything you put in your syllabus. So, instead of going over the syllabus on day one, build some excitement and joy by creating an environment you would have wanted to be a part of when you were their age. Get to know your students and let them get to know you.

Build strong relationships:

- Let students know a little about who you are allow your students to see that you are a genuine person.
 - Share a little about yourself: hobbies, struggles you had in school, favorite lessons to teach, why you got into teaching, pets, etc.
- Share a Pair students up with one another and have them create a four slide PowerPoint about one other. Have the students present their PowerPoint to the class or in small groups.
 - Slide one-What name do you like to be called (pronunciation and/or nickname)
 - Slide two-Something interesting about you. (Hobby, double jointed, moved from Portugal)
 - Slide three-Favorite place to be and why?
 - Slide four-One thing you would like to learn more about
- Give a student survey
 - What name do you like to be called? (Pronunciation or nickname)
 - How do you learn best? (hands-on, reading, listening, independent, small group)
 - Your interests?
 - How do you like to be recognized?
 - Anything else I should know that will impact your learning. (Job, sports, caregiver, challenges)
- In groups of three create the tallest tower in 10 minutes
 - Use toothpicks and marshmallows, spaghetti and marshmallows, popsicle sticks and clay, or anything that is easily accessible.
 - You can then listen to the conversations, take notes on your students.
 - Who took charge?
 - Who is sitting back and observing?
 - Who is the problem-solver?

Before the students walk in the door:

- Always be prepared and purposeful – leave nothing to chance
- If it's busy work and you aren't providing feedback...don't do it
- Have everything you need at your fingertips – purposeful planning before the students walk in the door
- Have a solid start to every class period (*students will see and feel the importance of their learning based on your intentional preparation, **enthusiasm**, and strong start every single day and every single class period*)
- Classroom arrangement
 - Arrange student desks for collaboration
 - Space for you to walk and facilitate small groups
- Space and place to post learning goals
 - These will change daily and be in student-friendly language
- Sharp and dull pencils

- Notebook paper
- White boards
- Dry erase markers
- Supplies (glue, markers, scissors)
- Laptop procedures-checking in and checking out
- Student Assistant (Door Opener-Classroom Phone Answerer-Supply Person)
- How will you recognize students who are working hard, following directions the first time given, being respectful to others, etc.
- Pacing is important...have everything at your fingertips and always be prepared

Procedures

- What to do when you walk in the classroom every single day
 - Turn in homework if there is homework
 - Begin “do now” work (5-10 minutes) This is independent work that ties into your curriculum and reviews a previous lesson, frontload for today’s lesson, or a spiral review.
 - Create a solid start to the lesson every single day
- How to switch classes (use timer) ...practice, practice, and practice... If it didn’t go well, sit down and try it again until they do it correctly. You dismiss the students, not the bell.
- Create procedures for bathroom use (one at a time with the bathroom pass on the desk)
- Create procedures for make-up work (where to find your make- up work when you were absent)
- Create procedures for not being prepared (not going back to the other classrooms to get materials)
- Always have a project that ties in with your curriculum for early finishers (PowerPoint lesson, passion project, reading, writing, or creating) Students should not be sitting and waiting for the rest of the class to finish an assignment.

Classroom Management System

- Positive behavior system
 - Positive affirmation when students are working hard and showing a growth mindset
 - Whole class goal to work towards a class reward
 - Set the goal prior to placing points on board or spelling out a reward (Board games, tech games, coding, movie, etc)
 - Meet the goal every two weeks or less the first two months of school and then again in April and May
 - Positive notes
 - High fives
 - Never remove points from the board or take back a positive note
- Make a positive phone call home to every student’s guardian the first two weeks of school (this will set you up for the rest of the year because they know you really care about their child’s well-being)
- Establish consequences that are consistent – students are watching to make sure you do what you say you will do every single time
- Send expectations home to guardians and when you need to contact the guardians, make sure you do every single time (positives and challenges)
- Call guardian when a student has missed three days of school
- Call guardian when a student is beginning to fail your class