

Reflection of Management

Undeniably, classroom management is one of the most influential aspects of the classroom. While a teacher may have great lessons and engaging content, it will not be nearly as effective without a strong classroom management plan. Ultimately, classroom management is the backbone to a functional classroom and without it, little to no learning will take place.

In order to develop an effective classroom management plan, I have examined research conducted by Dreikur, Jones, and Kounin as well as observation of my mentor teacher and students. Through combining aspects of each of these, I have compiled many management strategies that I believe will largely help with the fluidity of my future classroom. While I draw from a variety of researchers, I would say I most closely align with the philosophies of Dreikur's democratic classroom model. Not only does this theory allow for the development of community, responsibility, and intrinsic motivation, but also contributes to the significant decrease of misbehavior.

Ultimately, classroom rules are essential in any educational environment to provide students with structure and explicit expectations. Following the democratic classroom model, I would incorporate students' input into the creation of our rules. Of course, I would also implement any rules I feel necessary that were not touched on by students. Observing this within my student teaching has shown me just how beneficial for the student this can be. Not only does this create a stronger sense of community, but my mentor teacher is able to explicitly show students which rule they broke. They are much more receptive as they contributed to the creation of the rules, and are even less likely to display the same misbehavior again, as I have observed in my placement classroom.

Moreover, Jones puts emphasis on creating rules that you are not willing to enforce every time, rules that are general for behavior and work, and simple, clear rules that are shared by all

students. These three ideals are consistent with the rules put in place in my placement classroom. While all aspects are beneficial, I am able to most directly observe the importance of rules that are enforced every single time. By doing this, the students have more respect for the rules, are more likely to follow them, and even more likely to correct misbehaviors for their peers if my mentor teacher does not due to missing the misbehavior.

Despite rules in place, misbehavior still persists in all classrooms at certain times. A teacher who is able to minimize the time spent addressing behavior management will significantly increase the amount of time allocated for instruction. Kounin argues that soft reprimands are often more effective than louder ones and result in a better ripple effect. My mentor teacher has mastered this skill and her class is the prime example of how effective soft reprimands truly are. Rather than loud ones, she will often reprimand softly while displaying the behavior she wishes to see. For example, when the class gets too loud, she will softly say “we need to quiet down” rather than yelling above students. As the students slowly begin to notice, they match her energy and voice level creating an almost immediate ripple effect. Had she attempted to yell louder than the noise, students often would continue to raise their voices as well.

Overall, there are a lot of ways to implement strong classroom management skills. I align with philosophies that are backed by research and I have observed them implemented in a positive way through my student teaching. While I have developed strong beliefs, I realize management must be flexible in order to meet the needs of my future classroom and individual students. Nonetheless, classroom management plans must be implemented clearly and consistently in order to create order and optimize learning.