**Class Structure, Documentation, and Communication Plan**

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Milner and colleagues (Milner et al., 2019) stated “Effective instruction is about building a supportive classroom community.” Through this, members of the community are able to develop stronger and richer relationships with one another. As a teacher, understanding the societal climate and context of a community is of the utmost importance. Students come from varying backgrounds that all contribute to the makeup of your classroom diverse community. Once a teacher has an understanding of who is coming into the classrooms they are able to help curate a community built for student success both academically and socially.

Teachers should always strive to create community in the classroom. Even more than just community, teachers should be creating a safe space where all parties involved feel connected to the community and invested in safe learning for others as well. The initial way I would like to attempt on the first day, by way of a set of classroom norms. Instead of calling them norms or rules, the term I will use is “Classroom Constitution.” As the name suggests a classroom constitution is a living document that is created with all the class participants. This document will be amenable to fit the needs of the class as we progress through the school year. By allowing the entire classroom community to have autonomy we are helping foster a safe space for students but also allows the teacher, who may be new to the area and not fully understanding of the customs. As a teacher, this information is invaluable; it helps foster a “growth mindset” (Dweck 2006) within the classroom.  
 Students who directly participate during a field experience generate a more positive attitude about the subject. Many researchers have investigated knowledge gain and learning that occurred during field trips (Behrent et al., 2014). Field trips are an integral part of the school experience especially in certain courses, such as history or science, because it allows students to make connections to real world experiences. Unfortunately, as teachers we have to understand this is not always feasible in the communities that we work. Another tactic that I would like to implement is called “Five Minute Field Trip”. Schools do not always have the funding to go on large scale field trips. The ideal goal for five minute field trips is to introduce students to regions and customs across the globe fostering a better understanding of the world around us. But also this doubles as a tool to reduce stress and help everyone, including the teacher, giving them a few moments to break away from the monotony of normal school curriculum. As a history teacher this is invaluable for students because they gain firsthand experience and knowledge about historical figures, sites and events. With that, lessons become more tangible exposing students to varying social, economic, and regional differences.

Visual representation is essential for young students in schools, structure does not stop at instruction. “Classroom designs should be deliberately organized and constructed. The physical organization of a classroom should promote the types of interactions teachers want students to have.” (Milner et al., 2019). Posters are a powerful medium to convey messages, they can be used to motivate, educate, and inform students when used correctly. Adversely, if there is no form of organization to these posters students can feel overwhelmed.

Schools are places where students are expected to make errors and learn from them (Milner et al., 2019). As educators we must be mindful of this when taking any form of disciplinary actions with students. Some occurrences in the classroom will inevitably be issues that must be sent up the chain of command. But there are many smaller issues that can be handled by the teacher and they never need to leave the classroom. Instances where a student should receive consequences should be properly addressed in the beginning of the school year. Especially when creating the constitution, when students are aware of what is expected of them and the consequences for not following those guidelines. Furthermore, educators must follow through with consequences that; are appropriate response to the incident that occurred and the student whose behavior may have slipped does not feel alienated from the rest of the group. Infractions that can be handled in the class should be, instances of chewing gum, wearing your hood in class, sleeping during instruction, and other smaller things should and can be handled inside the classroom. The key element to this is discernment, a typical school year in Virginia is one hundred and eighty instructional days, the students and teachers will not always be at their personal best. Maintaining a healthy line of communication between cohorts is key when being put in the position to discipline students.

Healthy communication is the baseline of every great classroom and every great teacher. While it might not always look the same, students generally understand which teachers are invested in their futures compared to teachers who come to work just to collect money. Without proper communication the classroom can fall into disarray. To create such an environment it is imperative that we reach out to the greater community behind the students.

There is an old African proverb that says “It takes a village to raise a child.” What this means is that to provide a safe, healthy and secure environment for children it takes the “village”, or the people, to all be involved and invested in the growth of their children and community. A teacher is an integral part of that community. As a teacher you should strive to communicate with all students in a greater community at least once a month. Teachers and parents need to build rapport with one another, as the teacher I will make my expectations known to the parents and students as early as possible. But to build such a harmonious relationship teachers must call, or even if its allowed and accepted within the school visit the homes of their students. To both show parents and students that their education matters.

**Bibliography**

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