

My goal as an educator is to prepare students to be successful, contributing members of society. I strive to do this through instilling a love of learning in all students, and teaching them how to find and apply new knowledge. I believe the best classrooms are ones where there is a feeling of welcome, safety, respect, and collaboration. Each student has individual needs, learning styles, and gifts to contribute, all of which will be valued and accepted. I provide developmentally appropriate activities, leveled learning, and collaboration each day. All students are given the chance to discover knowledge in the way they learn best; I strive to include all learning styles throughout the daily lessons and assignments. I use frequent assessments, both formal and informal, to help assess and guide the curriculum and lead the class into deeper more meaningful education. Students will be responsible to take an active role in their learning. I expect them to participate, work hard, do their personal best, and be accepting of all. Students are encouraged to express themselves, take charge of their education, and of course develop a love for learning.

I believe through proper planning and preparation of developmentally appropriate and engaging curriculum, holding high expectations in the class, and respect for all will eliminate most of the day-to-day behavior problems in the class. Difficult students will be dealt with according to their individual needs, and behaviors. I strive to create a system that will work for each student, behavior plans and contracts may be used with these students, as well as increased communication home.

Rules

I have two nonnegotiable rules for my classroom respect and responsibility. At the beginning of the school year I explain the two rules to the class. We take time to learn and understand what each rule means. We practice the rules until all the students know them, and what they look like in the classroom. We agree to be models of the rules, and to help everyone remember what is expected of them.

Consequences to breaking rules:

First warning- a friendly reminder.

Second warning- students may have to change activities, move seats, or lose an individual privilege.

Third warning- removal from the group, talk with the teacher.

Fourth warning- group meeting with the teacher, student, and parents (this may also include principal if needed).

Rewards

Throughout the year my class is given opportunities to earn class rewards. They will earn these in several different ways, good behavior, creating a safe happy classroom community, and showing hard work. Rewards are always earned as a class and everyone will have a chance to participate. Rewards might be extra recess, special treats, or earning a new book for the classroom library.

Classroom procedures

Creating classroom procedures is a big part of my management. I believe that having established classroom procedures, which students know and follow, allows for the classroom to flow much easier. Each day follows the same format to create routine for my students. The daily schedule is posted and reviewed in the morning. Procedures provide freedom, and create self-efficacy, because students know when, and what to do, with out my constant help. I model and practice all procedures at the beginning of the year, and review them often. Once the class has learned the necessary day-to-day procedures they will learn more procedures that will allow them more freedom; for example checking out books from the classroom library. My classroom contains materials and activities that each student can use, and do with a slight yet reachable challenge. By

providing materials that are developmentally appropriate students are able to do what is expected of them without added stress or fear.

Student Cubbies- Students are assigned a cubby for the year. This is where I place items that need to go home. Students are responsible to check and take home items in the cubby everyday.

Classroom communication- The beginning of each month I send home a classroom newsletter, that contains a detailed schedule of the month to come, a review of what we will be learning, and updates of what we have recently learned. I send weekly e-mail updates with important reminders for the upcoming week that pertain to the school or my individual class.

Homework folders- Each Monday students take home homework folders. They contain the homework pages for the week. These pages include, daily timed fluency in reading and math, weekly spelling practice, a math page, and a language arts page. Instructions of the homework are included. Students are also assigned reading minutes each night, and record their reading minutes in the chart provided. The homework folder is due on Friday. Although all homework folders contain the same things, I do differentiate the homework for different learning abilities. Homework pages should not take longer then 5-10 minutes a night.

Finished box- anything that needs to be turned into the teacher goes into the finished box, this includes notes from home, homework, finished assignments, and borrowed materials (books, flash cards, etc.).

Class jobs- Each Monday I assign new class jobs. These jobs are the student's responsibility for the week. Every student has a chance to have each job throughout the year. One of the class jobs is note taker; the note taker is in charge of recording the schedule and notes for the week. They are also responsible for collecting notes and materials for absent students. When students are absent they will get the materials from the note taker, and will turn in the completed work at a later date.

Volunteers- Classroom curriculum and learning is enriched when we have the support of volunteers. There will be many opportunities provided for parents to volunteer, which will be discussed with parents at the beginning of the year.

Centers- Centers are an important part of my classroom. Centers provide a variety of activities that allow for children to learn through a hands on approach. Some might refer to this as play however; play is a very valuable educational tool, and a necessary part of a child's life. It is their work. In my class, students work at centers everyday. Students will earn sticks throughout the week for completing a center. There are required centers, which are called star centers, and centers that students can choose from. Students are expected to do their best work, complete all of the star centers, learn, and have fun.

Fast finishers- When students have finished their assigned work early, they will go to the fast finishers box. The box contains extra work that provides practice with the skills I am teaching in class. Materials in the box are changed weekly.

Classroom arrangement

My classroom will be set up in a way that encourages peer collaboration, student independence, safe learning, and fun. Ideally desks will be arranged in tables, facing forward for direct instruction, there will be an area on the floor for group time. Each space will be used for daily centers. Students will switch seats often to help foster friendships, and teamwork.

Communication with parents

I will communicate home through e-mails, phone calls, class website, notes, and prearranged conferences.

My hope is that by creating an environment that allows for independence, collaboration, respect, and safety each of my students will want to participate in, and be a part of the learning process. I will always hold high yet reachable expectations of all my students to help see growth and development each day.