Graham MacBean – February 8th, 2016

Ed 3601 - Dr. John Poulsen

Management Plan

**Interpersonal Connection:**

An interpersonal connection is vital to building a positive learning environment, and in managing classroom behaviour. Without this, teachers must either rely on threat of punishment, or bribery. This in turn will undermine internal motivation, leading to students who do not actually want to do the work. Instead, the ideal teacher fosters the following:

Leadership – Teachers who are leaders in the class hold themselves professionally both physically and in conversation. They are role models, leading from the front. That is to say, the leading teacher exhibits the characteristics the students are to emulate, rather than declaring, “do as I say, not as I do”. They push students to their best, which comes as a result of their charisma and the construction of a positive learning environment.

Attitudes – Teachers must have a positive attitude regarding the curricular content, the learning environment, and efficacy of the students. Without these, the students will not respond with enthusiasm or give a solid effort. Next, teachers must be real with their students. A distant or unattainable teacher cannot make connections with students; therefore, teachers who think they are better than their students or share none of themselves will suffer in classroom connections. Finally, the teacher must be interested. If the teacher is not interested, neither will the class.

Preparation – The leader is prepared, and comes with a battle plan. While in the words of Sun Tzu, “no battle plan survives contact with the enemy”, the leader who fails to plan has already last before the battle begins. Preparation is evidenced by a good lesson plan, being early or on time, having the physical space organized, and ready to greet students.

Connections to whole class – The teacher must make connections to the class as a whole. The class is a community, so making individual connections alone is not enough. That said, a good beginning is letting the students know they are welcome and appreciated while shaking hands. A smaller class may allow for more discussion, otherwise short answers in the form of “question of the day” can be instrumental to this end. Lastly, listening to students will make them feel valued and appreciated.

Connections on an individual level – Asking students about their interests, listening to their concerns, and finding time outside the classroom are all good ways to build a relationship on and individual level that lets the student know they are not just a number. If they believe you care about them, they will be more likely to try hard and respect your authority.

Some examples of ways to implement these ideas – In my coming practicum I have been given the opportunity to teach drama, which allows naturally for the use of relationship building games. Beyond this, I hope to visit student clubs, and question my TA about relationship and management skills he uses. Moreover, I hope to talk with students before and after class, preferably outside the classroom or school, such as waiting for the bus or during supervision. Lastly, I hope to involve the student’s lives in the curriculum, through having them write their own plays, for instance.

Bumps – Bumps in class give opportunities every step of the way for the students to do the right thing and correct their own behaviour. They give power to the teacher by providing a script for each interaction. When an apology is received, deescalating afterwards by “melting” or “softening” is a reward and thanks for doing the right thing and brings about a return to a good relationship. With this, a toxic relationship will fester until forgiveness and reconciliation is reached. Furthermore, the visible change in bumps allows students to see your levels of escalation, so they don’t feel they were unfairly disciplined. They also all a teacher somewhere to build from, as teachers receive what they allow in terms of behaviour – the sooner one addresses an issue, even lightly, the sooner students realize the behaviour is wrong. Making sure to reconnect with the student after any form of punishment lets the student know that the behaviour is the problem, not the student. Lastly, by suiting the punishment to the crime one can maintain relationships, which can help maintain a positive learning environment.

Monitoring:

Monitoring has several components, discussed in the following six points.

1. Scanning

Teachers must actively and attentively scan the room every 10 – 15 seconds. One has no hope of formatively assessing the class, or preventing negative incidents if one is not watching the students. To this end, it is imperative to position oneself in such a way that all the students are visible with one’s body facing the students, like an audience. When scanning, actually looking at each student to check they are on task and safe is key, which may mean checking for the unordinary. Scanning also involves the other senses, such as hearing. A good time to scan is right after asking a question – like a magician misdirecting the audience, controlling attention is useful in this instance. Particularly when working with small groups or individuals, be careful to actively scan while assisting.

1. With it ness

A mark of those who possesses ‘With-it-ness’ is awareness, or at least they maintain the image that they know more than they do. These teachers are not distracted by rabbit trails, and know when the class will end to the minute. They do not run around preparing for the class about to start, but are ready to greet the students at the door. They are confident, and collected.

1. Whole class instruction

Whole class instruction must feature a high teacher status, both in diction, tone, content, and most importantly, posture. One can and should move in and out of high teachers status when dealing with individual students. Teachers should wait up to 20 seconds for their attention getting strategies to take effect and have the students quiet down. Telling them to be quiet and reprimanding them before that shows impatience and may make students feel unfairly chastised.

1. One on One interaction

During one on one interactions between teacher and student, it is important to move to low teacher status, with the exception of disciple procedures. At this time, be careful not to get sucked into tunnel vision and neglecting to scan the rest of the class. Should another student require your attention, apologize to the student you were assisting. Outside the class, taking a listening role is advisable in one on one interactions. Some times teachers have the hardest time learning to be quiet. (myself included)

1. Politeness

Being polite and respectful is vital as a part of teaching, as students will respond better to honey than vinegar. Even when disciplining, doing so in a way that maintains the autonomy and dignity of the students will have them be more likely to treat you will respect as well. Politeness is not just for one’s students though; teachers are part of a collective staff, and must get along well as a team. Politeness goes a long way in this endeavour.

1. Remaining calm

Attacking students is never defensible, or useful. Teachers must be role models for students, since if we do not stay calm our students will not remain calm. Blowing up on one’s students simply serves to enrage them more, and removes power from the teacher. More destructively, losing one’s cool sabotages the positive learning environment. The students will not respond to the teacher’s kindness anymore, as it will feel fake. Unless the altercation is resolved with a return to relationship, the pain will continue until addressed. When the student backs down, this is why it is important to let them know you still like them. Saying “Thank you” goes a long way in this regard. As well, even when the students are simply excited and come at the teacher like a wave, staying calm is imperative towards constructive teaching and scanning.

Behaviour Chart:

*Note: I would show this to my students and/or build one with them such that they recognize that discipline in my class is fair, predetermined, and swift. For higher-level problems, the punishment should match the crime. (e.g. student deliberately makes a mess, needs to clean up the whole class)*

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| **Level** | **Student** | **Teacher** |
| Low | Low swear, teasing, littering, off-task | Teacher look, Look plus high status, Look + status + turn |
| Low - Medium | Student disrupting class, refusal to do work, playing on phone | Name of student/s, verbal correction |
| Medium | non-consensual roughhousing, swear at a person, | Proximity, separate and deal with quickly, use name |
| Medium - High | Breaking of equipment, co-ordinated prank on teacher, shunning of a particular student | Separate and find explanation, class discussion, student vote on consequence |
| High | Continual high level swear, verbal abuse, violent altercation | Remove from class and speak in private, send to administrator, call police |

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