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CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN THE FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

As face-to-face teaching and peer reviews of teaching become the norm again after the Covid lockdowns which varied considerably among our various jurisdictions, it was thought appropriate to return to some aspects of classroom management in which learning should occur. Many students, and some teachers, have only experienced 'remote' teaching and learning!

There has been much discussion about classroom management in recent media claims about the lowering of student achievement. While for most of us this may not be a serious issue, some colleagues have suggested that it might be timely to recall some of the elements of this topic. To do so, I have chosen some parts from a chapter of that title in a textbook which goes back to the era of old-fashioned, but very effective, teachers' colleges. No matter how experienced we may be in teaching, some basic reminders can never hurt! The book in question is

Connell, W.F., W.J. Campbell, R.L. Debus, G. Howie, A.G. Maclaine, T.W.G. Miller, Marie D. Neale, D. Spearritt, D.J.A. Verco & Joyce F. Wylie, (1965). *The Foundations of Education*. Sydney, NSW: Ian Novak, Ch.13: Classroom Management and Discipline, pp,220-229.

These men and women were dedicated educators who loved teaching and transmitted their enthusiasm to those who were fortunate enough to learn about teaching from them. What follows here lays no claim to be original. It is merely a summary of the section headings. It is so easy to slip into taking things for granted in teaching in general and other bad teaching habits in business and commerce!

Routine in Classroom Activities

The basic principle is that each lesson should have a beginning, a middle, and an end!

- Habitual check of physical condition of classroom.
- Begin promptly.
- Mimeographed copies of exercises required for a lesson.
- Effective and quietly prompt routine.
- Recognized procedure for seating.

* These papers are for internal discussion within CESA on topics related to the CESA Mission.

- Detect early symptoms of disorder.

Physical conditions

- Lighting.
- Heating and Ventilations.
- Physical appearance of the classroom.
- Reducing classroom fatigue.
 - Lack of planning.
 - Unnecessary writing.
 - Inadequate provision for individual differences.
 - Too slow in correction of students' papers.
 - Excessive clerical work for teachers.

Meaning and Purpose of Discipline

Discipline should

- ✓ be based on "do" rather than "don't".
- ✓ involve a high degree of participation.
- ✓ involve acceptance of responsibility.
- ✓ involve consideration for others.
- ✓ concern rightness and justice.
- ✓ cover situations which require correction.

Some causes of disciplinary disorders:

- a) Poor physical conditions.
- b) Maladjustment of some students.
- c) Disturbances in group climate.
- d) Teacher's personal qualities.
- e) Institutional morale.

Minimizing disciplinary problems:

- f) Know names of students.
- g) Physical comfort.
- h) Be friendly and encouraging.
- i) Show confidence in students.
- j) Speak convincingly and clearly.
- k) Avoid distracting mannerisms.
- l) Insist on order and attention.
- m) Have as few rules as possible.
- n) Avoid the use of threats.
- o) Praise judiciously to stimulate effort.
- p) Use humour if appropriate.

Punishment

- ❖ Seek the basic causes of disruptions.
- ❖ Should fit the crime.
- ❖ Should not be humiliating.
- ❖ Remain calm and detached.
- ❖ Should be understood by the students.
- ❖ Appraise effects of punishment.
- ❖ Should be consistent and reasonably prompt.

Summary

“An efficiently managed classroom is one which provides maximum opportunities for learning by maintaining pleasant working conditions and a stimulating atmosphere, and by reducing to a time-saving routine the management details involved in the regulation of physical conditions and the conducting of lessons”.

Further Reading

Korpershoek, H., Harms, T., de Boer, H., van Kuijk, M., and Doolaard, S. (2016). “A Meta-Analysis of the Effects of Classroom Management Strategies and Classroom Management Programs on Students’ Academic, Behavioral, Emotional, and Motivational Outcomes.” *Review of Educational Research*, 86(3), 643-680. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315626799>.