CLASSROOM LEADERSHIP STYLES

by:

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As teachers we need to strive for positive relationship with our students—one that has clear expectations, but is based on mutual respect, communication, and kindness. Yes, kindness! Just because we are in control, and expect appropriate behavior, does not mean the teachers need to be cold or distant. Being friendly and having a good rapport with students can go a long way towards creating a positive classroom environment. Students cannot read our minds; we must effectively communicate our desires and expectations. However, this can be done in a friendly respectful manner.

The Dictator Leadership Style

This teacher is often afraid of losing control, so he/she resorts to maintaining a very distant and stringent relationship with the students. This result in a relationship with the students that is business like, firm, and authoritarian. There is no room for group discussion or banter of any sort. Routines are strictly adhered to and all tasks are performed in a quiet and efficient manner. Students are not encourage to be individuals and active participants, but rather are expected to conform to the teachers way of learning. Creative thinking is not encourage, while memorization of rote facts and “skill and drill” are the main learning styles of the classroom.
The Free Spirit Leadership Style

This teacher wants to be buddies with the students rather than an authority figure. Students are allowed to create the rules and make most classroom decisions without guidance. Lesson plans are loosely sketched and student digressions dictate the course of a lesson rather than the teaching objective. Students are given maximum freedom to work and move about the classroom. The teacher gives the students the responsibility to make decisions for them and to “be their own boss.”

An ingredient in this recipe is a teacher who is more than likely unorganized and unprepared which result in a choppy and incomplete presentation. Students are kept waiting while the teacher mentally decides what to do next and what to look for materials. Students get confused and distracted easily which result in disruption after disruption. This in turn result in more “breaks” as the teacher must stop to deal with unruly behavior.

When students are not actively engage in learning, or are off task, this teacher is often quick to anger because he/she feels that the students are taking advantage and abusing the freedom given.

The Balance Leadership Style

This leadership style blends both the other styles to achieve the greatest result. As they say, “Everything in Moderation!” A teacher using this balance approach to classroom management will set limits and communicate expectations clearly, as well as follow routines and procedures to create an orderly classroom environment.
Organization is very important to maintain a productive classroom. Discipline is the key component to this relationship. The teacher expects rules to be followed and consequences are consistent when behavior is inappropriate.

This leadership style is student-centered, but recognizes that students need guidelines to feel comfortable. Our students require boundaries to feel at ease. Teachers who used a balanced approach encourage the students to be responsible for their own actions and hold them accountable. Although maintaining order and productivity is vital, allowing the students to be actively involved in the learning process is also a must! Students need some freedom and voice in the classroom in ordered to feel valued and motivated. Personal choice and grouped discussions are daily occurrences which thrives the student involvement.

Communication is another key in this balanced forum. Clear expectations must be explained and reinforced if a teacher desires to be able to discuss, move, and work about the classroom freely. The more specific directions and expectations are, the better will understand and follow them!

References:

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