SETTING UP LIMITATIONS ON BEFRIENDING YOUR STUDENTS

by:
Jerwin M. Velasco
Teacher – Applicant

Befriending or being friends with your students can be rewarding at some point. In this way, you can gain their trust and have them open up to you. In classroom discussions, they will also not be shy anymore when doing recitations. But these technique has limitations because in classroom management, you’ll struggle on earning respect from them.

When you are friends with your students, they feel like you’re on the same level, like, on the same age. This will greatly affect your teaching ways because as a teacher, you should be an example, not someone who they can hang out with. Also, the authority will no longer be there because they treat you as their buddy already. Another thing is, when you became friends with your students, some may think that you have favoritism.

How do we really limit our friendship with our students? From an article published on November 2013 by Middleweb, which is entitled, Can Teachers and Students be Friends?, Larry Ferlazzo, who is a high school teacher in Sacramento, California answered this question. Mr. Ferlazzo, answered this by differentiating private from public relationships. He said that private relationships are those that usually encompass our families and friends. He expects not to be judged and expects loyalty. Public relationships, on the other hand, include everyone else, so he expects respect and gain it by being accountable for someone’s actions. He then said that a relationship with our students is a public one. By his answer, he meant that students and teachers’ relationship should not be on the same level. Respect should be gained
and professionalism should be maintained. This is how we should limit our friendship with our students. He also said to a student that he is a supportive teacher and would not go an extra mile for someone who doesn’t respect him.

Therefore, we, as teachers, should always put in mind that being friendly is not the same as being friends with our students. Respect earned from them should always be there and we should also be articulate between the relationship we and our student is having, that is, a public relationship that requires patience and understanding, as Mr. Ferlazzo said. Also, we should always be professional in everything we do so as to be a role model for our students.

References:

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